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**Master Gardener's
Class of Fall, 2006**

(from l to r, 1st row)
Philip Ericson,
Dedra McCallister,
Barbara Lipton,
(r. 2) Carol Houck,
Reva Brugnoli,
Cheryl Banack,
Mildred Tardif,
Olivia Larkins,
Peggy Lee,
(r.3) Greg Smith



In November, a new
group of Master
Gardeners graduated
and went right to

work. They pulled, chopped, pruned and planted around the IRC Extension office building. This continued the efforts of previous classes. Rick Walker delivered mulch at a later date and MGs spread the good stuff around.

Officers, 2007

Tanya Goldsmith,
President
Kathy Wegel
Vice-President
Margie Davis
Secretary

And others:

.Events
coordinator for
field trips:
Olivia Larkins

Newsletter:
Carol Houck

And the
Event
Coordinators:
Arzella Hatfield
Lois Schwartz

From the director, Indian River County Extension

This is a busy time for all of us given the new round of festivals, fairs and other garden related activities that we have scheduled this spring. I hope that for all of you volunteering at these activities that you take a little time for yourself and enjoy the venue as well. These different opportunities help all of us to become re-energized about gardening, lawn care and perhaps even, vegetable growing. During all of the hustle and bustle of getting publications together, Loading and unloading the van, weathering the elements, setting up and tearing down the exhibit and answering the seemingly endless questions about lawn care, it is important to remember why you are a Master Gardener to begin with. Don't miss out on the chance to see, smell and touch new and interesting plants that you may not have experienced before. Share your knowledge with the customer, but don't forget to do a little for yourself as well!

I know that all of you are waiting with baited breath to hear an announcement about the new Environmental Horticulture agent who will also serve as the Master Gardener coordinator. Well, we had the interviews last month and UF/IFAS and I agreed on one candidate; we offered her the position and she tentatively accepted. I say tentatively because I felt that her experience and knowledge warranted a closer look at the salary that was originally offered. I am currently waiting for an amendment from the Board of County Commissioners that would allow for this exception. I am hoping we will have a resolution by the end of February. Keep your fingers crossed! She is an excellent candidate with impressive credentials and I think that all of you would enjoy her leadership and experience. I will let you know more details as they progress.

Christine

Gifford Garden History and Restoration

According to an Indian River County Extension Service memorandum, dated October 1, 1998, from Dan Culbert to Freddy Woolfork at the Gifford Youth Activity Center (GYAC), the Gifford Garden Project became a reality that year. The project, under the sponsorship of the University of Florida Extension Service, became the responsibility of the Indian River Master Gardeners. It received a great deal of community support in the form of donations and assistance, and was designated as one of United Way's Day of Caring projects. GYAC instituted "The Garden Club" that provided an opportunity for the young to participate in all aspects of creating and caring for a garden. The Master Gardeners of that era performed wonders with the kids resulting in the receipt of the prestigious National Gardening Association, Youth Garden Grants Program Award in 2001.



As the years passed by the original seven Master Gardeners motivating the project moved away or became inactive. Then in 2004 hurricanes Francis and Jeanne scored a direct hit on Indian River County, followed by Wilma in 2005, devastating the garden, demolishing the garden shed and much of the infrastructure. Two Master Gardeners, Carolyn Norton and Clare Kaelin made a valiant attempt to maintain the garden and continue the weekly Garden Club kids activities. But both these MGs now have full time jobs and the garden needed some major surgery; it had become completely overrun (we should say *under-run*) with rhizome propagating *Panicum repens* (Torpedo Grass), *Cyperus rotundus* (Purple Nut Sedge), *Cyperus esculentus* (Yellow Nutsedge) and other weeds. In addition the overgrown vines on the Pagoda, assisted by hurricane force winds, had given the structure the appearance of the "Leaning Tower of Pisa," and for to all appearances, the fence was being supported by wild grape with roots extending 10 or more feet into the garden.



Even with the assistance of an Eagle Scout project, the welcome help of the Indian River Parks Department and repeated applications of Round-up, by the fall of 2005 the garden was an unmitigated disaster! But the United Way's commitment to the project provided 12 willing volunteers on the Day of Caring in September of 2006 who saved the day. A super-human effort by this team assisted by GYAC staff and aided by the Parks Dept. cleared the garden sufficiently to start a restoration project that is on-going. Much has been done by current Master Gardeners to get the garden on a path to recovery that should see completion by the spring of this year (2007)

While the Gifford Garden is run by the Indian River Master Gardeners, it is a Community Garden and those living in the community are encouraged to participate alongside the MGs. Also, and critically important, is the need to have other Master Gardeners assist in both garden activities and teaching an energetic group of kids.



Profile of a Master Gardener: Tanya Goldsmith

Thank you, Tanya for giving us the wonderful story about how you became a master gardener.

I got my love of gardening early, thanks to my Bobba (Russian Grandma). Every visit to her place began in the garden near a huge snowball bush. She opened the old wooden gate and bent her round Russian body over each plant and named them all for me with her thick accent. We then strolled down her brick path to the rose garden where she gathered armfuls of blooms for me to take home. Is it any wonder that I also have a brick pathway and a rose garden, though according to memory not nearly as grand as hers?

My father loved to plant trees and allotted me a patch of ground to work a vegetable Garden. Pumpkins were my favorite! Once I married, I relied on my skill at vegetable gardening to help feed us but I also enjoyed berry bushes, fruit trees and flowerbeds. Our move to Florida was disappointing at first as I struggled to grow potatoes, cukes and tomatoes the way I had up north. Bugs, humidity and nutrient starved sand put my gardening endeavors to the test. Years went by with me not growing anything but a few ornamentals. I began to search for information and upon reading an informative article noticed the words Master Gardener. I wondered about that title and how they became one. Then at the Fellsmere Frog Leg Festival I stopped by a booth with a huge banner Master Gardeners. I asked for some gardening help as well as information on how to become one. They were very friendly and gave me what I needed.

I was excited to begin my journey as a Master Gardener. Now I am beginning the year as President of an organization of very diverse gardeners. As determined as I am to grow organic there are those who are just as determined to try every new chemical on the market. As important as I feel it is to lure wildlife INTO my yard, there are those who want every critter in their yard done in. Some only plant Natives, others only orchids, some have even mastered vegetables!

So one of the things I believe is so important to this organization is that we accept each other and enjoy the company of those who are like minded in love of the garden, even though we may differ in our gardening goals and approaches. Some things I hope for this year would be visiting community gardens together, as well as, sharing our personal gardens with each other. I would love for those interested to share photos of their gardens and how they are progressing.

One particular goal I have is that we all step out of our comfort zone and invite others to receive the Master Gardener title so that they too can share the knowledge gained and the fulfillment that helping others brings.

Tanya Goldsmith
January 12,2007

We will be asking each of you for your story. I wonder how many new master gardeners learned about the program at the Fellsmere Frog Festival.



The Master Gardener Christmas Party was fun --- great food, Wonderful plant exchange, and good friends.



For January's program Violet Krochmalny gave an extremely useful program on how to use EDIS and how to get information from EDIS in an easier way. Thanks, Violet

Walter Hearn, Jr. has been very ill. He has been in the Sebastian River Medical Center. No visitors, please but cards would be nice. Home: 8365 93rd Ave. VB 32967
A get well card to Ann Dann would encourage her. Home: 826 Robin Lane, SEB 32958

Events:

March 1: Master Gardener Series: Turf Grass Part II: IRS North Co. Library, Sebastian 10:30 – 11:30. Cost: Free.

March 28: MG series: Turf Grass Part II: Vero main Library. 10:30-11:30. Cost; Free

Every Wednesday: **Clinic** at North I.R. C. Library, Sebastian, 10:00am to 12:00 a.m.

Every Saturday: **Clinic** at McKee Botanical Gardens, 10:00 am to 12:00 a.m.

2nd and 4th Saturday: **Clinic** at Environmental Learning Center, 10:00am to 12:00 am.

Monday to Friday: Clinic at Vero Beach I.R.C. County Extension Office, 9-12 and 1-4

Olivia Larkins is putting together a list of events we could participate in - a lot of fun things. Contact her at keylime@bellsouth.net and come to the **next MG meeting** Feb. 15th.

March 15: Calling all volunteers: It's that time again for Ag Literacy Day (<http://www.flaginthe classroom.com/>) . Volunteers go to different schools on Thursday, March 15 to read to elementary school classes. Shifts are from 10:00am-12:00am and then again from 1:00pm-3:00pm. It is similar to a reading marathon and kids enjoy it. MG volunteer hours apply and this year's book is "Oh Say Can You Seed" from the "Cat in the Hat Learning Library". We organize everything for you including books and schedule. Please consider giving some of your time for this valuable activity. Christine

I hope you enjoyed this newsletter. Please send news to Carol Houck, CAHK@aol.com
Contact people: Joan Benson at the extension office jbenson@ifas.ufl.edu for forms, etc.
Or Violet Krochmalny at the extension office violetk@ifas.ufl.edu