



MG DIRT



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE INDIAN RIVER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

ISSUE DECEMBER 2009 VOL 4

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Note from Christine

This is the perfect opportunity to take some time and get you caught up on what we have been doing at the extension office. First of all, I would like to introduce our newest graduates from the Master Gardener training program. Fourteen brave and stalwart individuals took part in the MG training for 2009; 4 in St. Lucie County in the early spring and 10 in our office in the fall. Anita Neal (Environmental Horticulture Agent & County Director, St. Lucie County) and I worked out an agreement so that no one that was interested in the volunteer training would have to go more than 6 months before another training started. We each hold open 4-5 slots for individuals from each other's counties to participate in the training. When the training is over they put their hours back in their own home county and are a MG of that county. This is helpful for both Anita and I since it allows us to take advantage of sponsoring 2 classes a year.

The four MGs that trained in St. Lucie County were Chris Pierce, Joannie Pope, Kerry Harvey, and Jim Whitman. Unfortunately we have lost Kerry to Pinellas County and Jim to deep-sea fishing. Luckily, we still have Chris (who volunteers at Gifford Youth Garden) and Joannie (who has been trying to get a vegetable garden started with Highlands Elementary). Recently, we added 10 more graduates from the IRC Fall class; Sue Hamel, Ed Holland, Kathie Jaskolski, Mary Lunn, Lee Place, Denise Power, Jamie Rothaug, Rita Silvia, Robin Sparks and Judith Taylor. Most of them have already hit the ground running scheduled in the clinics with a mentor, **and** have become interested in a variety of projects that you will learn about in later issues. I hope that you will welcome them warmly when you run in to them at the clinics or at other volunteer venues.

Graduating MG Class of 2009

Front Row – L-R Jamie Rothaug, Rita Silvia, Kathie Jaskolski, Denise Power, Mary Lunn, Lee Place

Back Row - L-R Judith Taylor, Sue Hamel, Ed Holland, Christine Kelly-Begazo, CED, Robin Sparks



OFFICERS

President: Margie Davis
Vice Presidents: Lucy Hope / Martha Willoughby
Secretaries: Lee Day / Cheryl Roseland
Treasurer: Richard Hope

COMMITTEES

Speakers Bureau: Pat Beckwith
Gifford Gardens: John Beukers
Spring Fling: Christine Kelly-Begazo / Pat Beckwith
Newsletter: Cara Woods
Field Trips: Lucy and Richard Hope
Landscape: Kerry Harvey

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Websites:

- **UF/IFAS County Extension Offices**
<http://www.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/>
 - **Gardening in a Minute**
<http://gardeninginaminute.ifas.ufl.edu/>
 - **Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS)**
<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>
 - **Florida Yards & Neighborhoods**
<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>
 - **UF/IFAS Environmental Horticulture**
<http://hort.ufl.edu/>
- Master Gardener**
<http://mastergardener.ifas.ufl.edu>
- **Florida-friendly Landscaping**
<http://www.floridayards.org/>

NOTE FROM CHRISTINE (cont.)

Speaking of volunteer opportunities—we are looking into having a once a month or twice a month MG clinic at the Oceanside Beach Market at Humiston Park. This will give us the opportunity to visit with some different clientele that might not normally come into our office. A few of you have already responded positively about volunteering at this venue. I will be there as well (just once a month though) to work with the farmers. Don't forget that after the holidays we will be gearing up for all of the spring festivals that take place beginning in late January; it seems like a far way off but I have learned that it is really right around the corner!

If any of you know someone that would like to take the MG training, St. Lucie County will begin their training in January. As I said before, they hold 4 spots for IRC people and we help each other out with the training. Have your interested friends contact Joan Benson and she will give them more information. I know that we all have a lot going on right now with the holidays and all but before you know it, the MG classes will be starting and it will be the fall before we offer them again.

At this time of year we seem to spend more time reflecting on all of the good things in our lives and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you and to let you know that I am very grateful for the time that you spend with us. I don't know what we would do without you---

I hope that we see you all at the holiday luncheon on Thursday, December 17th, but if we don't, I hope you and your family have a wonderful holiday season.

Sincerely,





MG METTING AT MCKEE

Article and Pictures

By: Suzanne Liggett

The September meeting of the Indian River County Master gardeners was held at McKee Botanical Garden on the 17th. The highlight of the meeting itself was the presentation of length of service awards to those volunteers who were on hand to receive them. Following the meeting tours of the garden were provided by Suzanne Liggett who has been a volunteer at McKee since the fall of 2000 and Helena Mahoney, a former Indian River County Master Gardener and long-time McKee volunteer. The tours focused on the many specimen plants throughout the 18-acre garden and included visits to the Garden's library which is available for research use, and the Ames Greenhouse and the nursery, which are off limits to the general public.



Written By Suzanne Liggett.

GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN

HERB BLENDS FROM YOUR GARDEN

Written By: Judith P. Taylor

Sharing your dried herbs is a wonderful way to share your bounty with friends. Not every cook has access to an herb garden.

The herbs can be packaged individually in small bags (cheesecloth makes great gift bags) or put into small jars or canisters that you decorate.

Don't forget to include a recipe or two for using the herbs. If you don't have all the listed ingredients, you can amend what you DO HAVE with herbs bought from a store OR make containers of the herbs you have in abundance. This new season's growth of oregano, mint, thyme or rosemary from your garden will beat out the faded, dried herbs your friends or neighbors have forgotten in the back of their panties.

Herbes de Provence

These herbs are native to the provence region of southern France. Traditionally they contain basil, bay leaf, marjoram, rosemary, savory and thyme. Lavender is often included, although use caution--a little goes a long way!

- * 2 tablespoons dried basil
- * 1 tablespoon dried marjoram
- * 1/2 tablespoon dried rosemary
- * 1 tablespoon dried summer savory
- * 2 tablespoons dried thyme
- * 2 teaspoon lavender flowers (optional)
- * 1 bay leaf

Cont. on page 5

GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN Cont. from page 4

Recipe for pasta seasoning

- * 4 tablespoons dried basil
- * 2 tablespoons dried oregano
- * 1 tablespoon dried thyme
- * 1 teaspoon dried garlic
- * 1 bay leaf

Air tight containers will help your herbs retain their freshness. Include a recipe or two, tie a colorful piece of yarn/ribbon around the neck of the container, and voila! A holiday gift to savor!

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

About two months after the hurricanes in '04, in which my container herb garden was destroyed, I found a tiny piece of Greek oregano (*Origanum vulgare hirtum*) under a ton of rubble outside in the yard. I was ecstatic! I lovingly dug it up and replanted it in a 'victory' garden just outside the long-gone linai and it is now HUGE!

Two years ago, I decided to root cuttings from the plant and give them as Christmas gifts. You can also plant a cutting directly into potting soil.

I purchased red 16 oz. plastic cups, filled them with potting soil and placed a cutting in each. I tied a piece of Christmas ribbon around each and attached a small card with the following information:

GREEK OREGANO

- The word 'oregano' means "joy of the mountain". Oregano grew prolifically on the Greek hillsides and was encouraged because it was believed to make the eat from grazing goats and sheep more tender and tastier.
- Plant your oregano in full sun, either in beds or containers. It will become a small bush or shrub and spreads quickly!
- It has a strong flavor and is an excellent choice for cooking. Slip a few leaves under the skin of a chicken before cooking or wrap several leaves inside a pork roast.
- Suspend clumps to dry in a warm, dark, dry area. Once dried, rub the clumps between your hands to crumble the leaves. Discard the stems. Store dried oregano leaves in an airtight container. Also, planting oregano with your beans, will produce a tastier harvest!

I gave these cuttings to my choir of some 50 members and I still hear from people that they have divided and shared their oregano plant with friends and family. One choir member even, started plants for Sunday School children to take home and plant.

September-December Birthdays



Lois Schwartz 9/28

Cheryl Ann Burke 10/9

Roy Hopper 10/20

Arzella Hatfield 11/1

Violet Krochmalny 11/22

Karen Vatland 11/24

Sherry Shipley 11/28

Alan Morton 12/10



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**Lois, Cheryl Ann, Roy, Arzella, Violet,
Karen, Sherry, and Alan!!!**

CONGRATULATIONS!

FOR REACHING 100 MG VOLUNTEERING HOURS



Cheryl Roseland and Cheryl Ann Burke recieved their 100 hour pins last meeting! Congrats to the both of you!!

Pics from the plant Auction November 2009



MG SPOTLIGHT



Pat Beckwith



Where are you from?: I was born and raised in Clearwater, FL

How long have you been in IRC?: Nine Years

MG Training: Class of 2002

What areas of gardening are you interested in the most?: I am most interested in bromeliads and have accumulated a fairly large collection of them. Most recently I have become interested in species orchids and now have several that are native to FL, the Caribbean and Central/South America.

Favorite Plant/Tree: The huge live oak in our front yard - we were told by an arborist that it is at least 175 years old! The tree was a major reason for buying the house and now is home to several bromeliads and tillandsias as well as an orchid or two.

Favorite Nursery: Tropiflora in Sarasota

What areas of Gardening do you specialize in?: Bromeliads and Orchids

Areas of Volunteer work with the MG program: In addition to being the President this year, I work at the Vero Beach Clinic, Gardenfest, etc. I have also been a member of the Master Gardener's Speakers Bureau.

Why did you become a Master Gardener?: I have loved gardening all my adult life while living in different areas of Florida. I wanted to expand my knowledge of gardening in this part of the state and help others enjoy gardening as much as I do. I had wanted to take the training much earlier, but could not because I was working full-time.

What do you do for a living?: I am a retired Registered Nurse, and volunteer with the Indian River County Health Dept. My husband and I have a small home business selling books on Amazon.com

What do you do in your spare time? Besides gardening, we enjoy our 2 beautiful grandchildren who live in Brevard County, take care of our 2 feline "girls" who keep us entertained, and use our book sales profits to fund our love of nature travel. We're currently debating where to go on our next trip- it's a toss up between going back to Baja for whale watching or going to Yellowstone in the winter for wildlife watching....

WORTHY OF NOTE

More than a few clients to the Vero Beach MG Clinic bring in “bugs” of all shapes and sizes for identification.

For some of us the identification process is time consuming and frustrating when no positive ID can be found requiring that the critter be sent to the University of Florida – at a charge. An alternative that worked well recently with a beetle brought in

by a homeowner is to post a photograph on Bug Guide <http://bugguide.net/> where you will find a community of experienced specialists just waiting for the opportunity to exhibit their identification skills. In this particular case an identification response was received in 20 minutes.

The beetle was a Longhorn, a rotting Oak invader - *Neoclytus scutellaris* - ♂



WRITTEN BY: JOHN BUEKERS

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

WRITTEN BY: JOHN BUECKERS

Some time ago The Jasmine Circle of the Indian River Garden Club donated the funds to purchase a microscope with an integral digital camera and software that can be plugged directly into the USB port of a computer. The software is installed on the Gifford Youth Activity Center's Weather Station computer and the microscope can be used by the Garden Club members. To assist MGs in learning how to use the microscope and software, it has been temporarily installed in the MG Office at the Vero Beach Extension Service. If any MG would like a tutorial on how to get the most out of this useful facility please see John Beukers who is in the office most Thursday mornings.



DECEMBER LUNCHEON

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON AT GIFFORD GARDENS

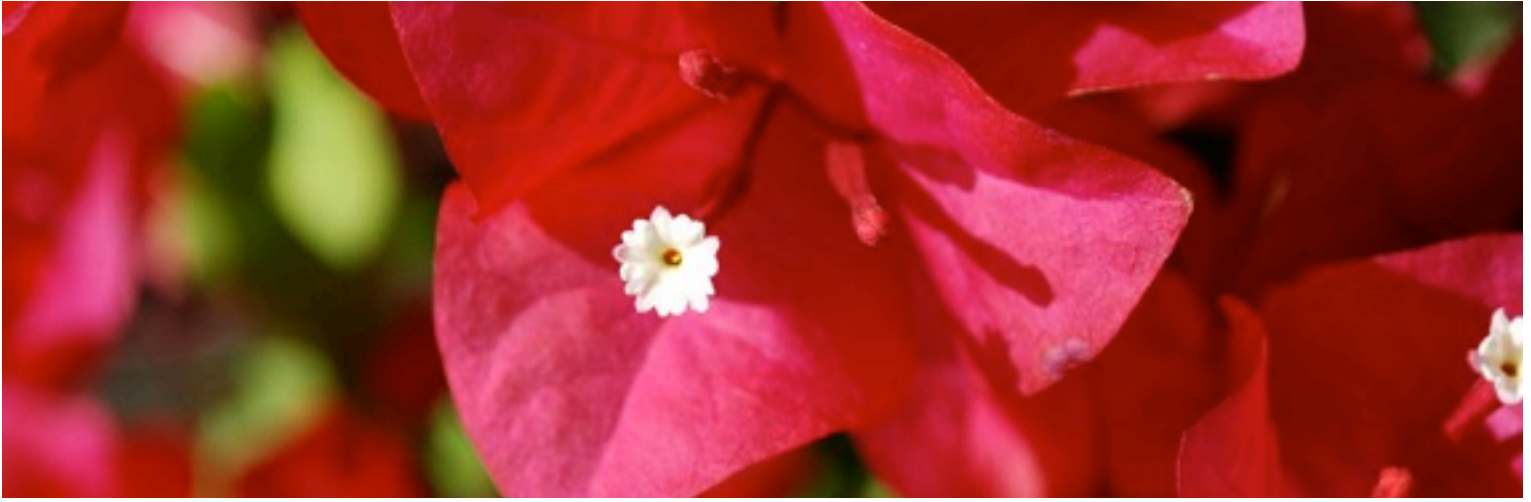
Our Holiday Luncheon will be held at Gifford Gardens this year. Everyone attending will bring a dish and a gift for the garden.

Gifts for the Garden/Children:

GYAC would welcome children's gardening books and it has been suggested that a section of the library be set aside for this discipline.

For the Gifford Garden, we need native plants and shrubs that will attract butterflies. These will be placed outside the fence in areas that can be irrigated if necessary. Written advice as to placement, care and feeding would be welcome along with any other pertinent information.

GYAC is located on the SW corner of 43rd Ave and 49th Street



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Written By Cheryl Ann Burke

Pecan Pumpkin Cheese Cake

Crust:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 3/4 cups Graham Cracker Crumbs | 1/4 cup sugar |
| 1/4 cup Melted butter | 1/4 cup Light brown sugar |
| 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans | |
- 1: Grease a 9 in Spring Form pan
 - 2: Combine ingredients and press into pan up about quarter inch on side.

Filling:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 1/2 cup solid pumpkin | 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon |
| 1/2 tsp nutmeg | 1/2 tsp ginger |
| 1/2 cup light brown sugar | 2 tbsp heavy cream |
| 1 tbsp cornstarch | 1 tbsp bourbon |
| 3- 8 oz packs of Cream cheese | 1/2 cup sugar |
| 1/2 tsp salt | 3 eggs |
| 1 tsp vanilla | |

- 1: Preheat oven to 350
2. In a bowl combine pumpkin, eggs, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, salt
And brown sugar
- 3: In a bowl with an electric mixer cream together the cream cheese
And sugar. Beat in cream, cornstarch, vanilla, and bourbon.
- 4: Combine pumpkin into cream cheese mixture.
- 5: Pour into crust and bake for 50 to 55 min.
- 6: Remove from oven and let stand 5 min.



Topping:

- 2 cups sour cream
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp Bourbon

1. Combine all ingredients and spread over top.
2. Bake for 5 min.
3. Remove and cool then chill thoroughly.
4. Decorate top with Pecan Halves

Plant of the Month

WRITTEN BY: Cheryl Ann Burke

Crossandra - A True Delight

By Cheryl Ann Burke, MG - 2007

How about a beautiful flowering plant with vibrant lush green leaves that do well in the shade and sun!

She sounds too good to be true here in zone 9 – Indian River County, Florida. However, *Crossandra infundibuliformis*, also known as the “firecracker flower” is just the thing for your special shade spot. With something this beautiful her species name is just too insulting!!

The *Crossandra* will grow to around 18 to 24 inches. Right now my plant is about 3 feet or taller and 3 feet or more wide. I like to tell my friends she thrives on neglect because this past summer (and those of you who stayed local know just how hot it got here in IRC) that she was barely watered . *Crossandra*'s like a site with well-drained, fertile soil. Feed monthly with light applications of a slow-released fertilizer like 12-6-6 with minor nutrients. In containers, feed with a balanced, controlled – release granular feritizer . She is plucky and wants to be seen. I have not had any pest problems in 4 years. Knock on wood!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are those activities that qualify for volunteer hours. If you are interested in volunteering for any of the following, please contact the Coordinator of each activity or call the Extension Office 772-770-5030.

Vero Beach Clinic Hours-

We need help on Mondays.

Contact Joan Benson 772-770-5030 or e-mail at

jebenson@ufl.edu

Sebastian Clinic-

Contact Carol Houck chouck@bellsouth.net

ELC

Contact Joan Benson 772-770-5030 or e-mail at jebenson@ufl.edu

Gifford Gardens-

Please join us Friday afternoons at 4 pm.

Contact John Buekers jb20@comcast.net

Mckee Botanical Gardens : Contact Lee Day for volunteer info at leesmailtoday@yahoo.com

Field Trip Committee-

Contact Lucy Hope and Richard Hope lucyhope@aol.com

Articles for the MG Newsletter-

Contact Cara Woods: kwequipment@aol.com

PLEASE HELP WITH ARTICLES!!

Landscaping / Beautifying the IRC Extension Office

We are looking for someone to head this committe!!

PLEASE HELP WITH IDEAS, PLANTS AND LABOR :)

PLANT SOCIETIES IN OUR AREA

The Vero Beach Orchid Society- Meet every third Thursday of the month-7pm at The Garden Club of Indian River County, 2526 17th Ave. Vero Beach, Florida. <http://www.indianriverorchidsociety.com>

IRC Bromeliad Society- Meet every second Monday evening of the month at The Garden Club of Indian River County, 2526 17th Ave. Vero Beach, Fl. Contact for more info irbromeliadsociety@gmail.com or <http://www.irbromeliadsociety.org>

Treasure Coast Bromeliad Society- Meet bi-monthly on the last Monday of the month at 5:30pm for the "pass a dish social"(drinks not provided) and the meeting starts at 6:00p.m. at the St. Lucie Agriculture Center at 8400 Picos Road, Fort Pierce, Florida. The next meeting is Monday January 25, 27th 2009.Pierce, Florida. <http://www.tcbromeliadsociety.org>

Florida Native Plant Society- Members meet monthly on third Thursdays at 7:30 pm in the Boathouse of the: Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory 200 9th Street SE Vero Beach. For Information about the chapter, contact Judy Avril

772-567-1565 <http://www.fnps.org/pages/chapters/chapterpg.php?keyword=Eugenia>

Rare Fruit Council- 778-8361

UPCOMING EVENTS 2010		
January 21-24th	Frog Leg Festival Fellsmere	http://www.froglegfestival.com
February 6th-7th	Garden Fest Vero Beach	http://www.gardenclubofirc.org/Gardenfest.html
March 12-21st	Fire Fighters Fair	http://www.firefightersfair.org
March 13th	Pelican Island Wildlife Festival	

Attention to everyone who brought a dish to the MG Graduation Luncheon!!

Please e-mail Cara Woods your recipe for the dish you brought to the MG Graduation Luncheon. Everyone was raving about the dishes and would love to have them in the Newsletter. Please e-mail them to kwequipment@aol.com and a pic if you have one!

Thanks for your help!!

SPECIAL THANKS

TO MG'S THAT HELPED OUT WITH NEWSLETTER THIS MONTH

CHRISTINE KELLY-BEGAZO FOR THE DECEMBER NOTE AND NOV. MEETING PICS!

SUZANNE LIGGET FOR THE PICS AND ARTICLE ON THE MEETING AT MCKEE

CHERYL ANN BURKE FOR THE PLANT OF THE MONTH AND RECIPE OF THE MONTH

JUDITH TAYLOR FOR THE GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN ARTICLE

JOHN BEUKERS- UNDER THE MICROSCOPE, GIFFORD GARDENS, AND NOTE WORTHY TIDBIT.

PAT BECKWITH MG SPOTLIGHT

JOAN BENSON FOR THE GROUP PIC