



**Aransas/San Patricio
Master Gardener Association**

February 2009

The President's Corner



January was a full month. Maryellen and her Hidden Gardens Tour team completed their search for gardens, with four lovely and complementary gardens in Portland and four in Rockport. Suzannah, Marilee and Russ kicked off the 2009 Fund Raising Committee Hidden Gardens Tour donor drive. Ellen and Cyndi stepped up to lead the Spring Plant Sale extravaganza. New members, Robert and Sally

Moore, joined Susan Hedrick to begin development of an exciting composting program. Pat's team is finalizing plans for activities in the soon-to-be-completed Discovery Room. Lonnie and Maryellen have the education programs underway. Frankie has submitted the 2009 Membership Directory for review and publication. Janelle found a great venue for our quarterly evening gatherings in the Beachfront Pavilion at Beach Park. Richard and the Audit Committee are hard at work on the audit report for the February general meeting. Vicki is cracking the whip on the Propagation crew. With one exception - the Oriental Garden in the Children's Discovery Garden - all the gardens have loving leaders and await the late-February prune, weed and spruce that will prepare them for spring and our fabulous Spring Plant Sale. Whew. Good job!!!!

Marilyn Vaughan

2009 Officers
President: Marilyn Vaughan
1st VP: Sandy Stanley
2nd VP: Ellen Reisinger
Secretary: Susan Lopez
Treasurer: Beth Wilson

Extension Agent:
Amy Freeman
Extension Office Manager:
Ernie Edmundson
Secretary: Thea Edmundson

Website:
<http://aransas-tx.tamu.edu>

**Seeking Serious
Plant Lovers**

Texas Master Gardeners are



a team of volunteer horticulture educators who are under the auspices of: Green Acres is our award winning demonstration garden located at 611 E. Mimosa, Rockport, Texas. The gardens showcase plants and landscape schemes suitable for the Coastal Bend. For help with plant problems, or for class information, please call (361)

Editors

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February Brown Bag
Tuesday, February 17 Noon-1:00 pm
"Hummer Habitat" – Plants for Attracting Hummingbirds, Ernie Edmundson, Master Gardener
Aransas County Library, 701 E. Mimosa, Rockport

In Area Newspapers this month watch for...
Success w/ Roses in the Coastal Bend - Suzie Cook
Waking Up Your Plumeria - Annette Fowler

January Volunteer Hours are due by Sat. Jan. 31st!
February Volunteer Hours are due by Sat. Feb. 28th!

Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Happy Birthday !
Beth Wilson, 3rd
Colleen Foreman 3rd
Bob Crawford, 10th
John Gravell, Jr., 22nd
Doree Osmun, 22nd
Cyndi Kuhn 26th

Green Acres Garden Days
February 6th and 18th
8 - 11 am Green Acres

Our Mission: *Improving the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high-quality, relevant education.*

From Our Writers

**SUCCESS WITH ROSES IN
THE COASTAL BEND**

By Suzie Cook, Master Gardener

Valentine's Day is a red-letter day on the calendar for many reasons (cards, candy and dinners out come immediately to mind), but for gardeners in the Coastal Bend, it marks the earliest date in spring to prune roses. If you are tempted by mild weather to prune your roses before mid-February, your reward may be a flush of new growth that is killed by a late cold snap.

When you do prune, remove dead, damaged and diseased wood first. Then eliminate stems that are crossing or tangling other stems. The object of pruning is to stimulate new growth and give the plant an open shape that lets in light and air. Easy-care shrub roses, such as Knockout or other Earth Kind roses, usually require only the lightest touch with the pruners. When you've finished the pruning chore, top-dress the soil around your roses with high-quality compost.

However, if you'd prefer to spend Valentine's Day hovering over a heart-shaped candy box, instead of battling thorns and spreading compost, consider planting a rugosa rose. *Rosa rugosa* is native to the salty, dry, windy and infertile sand beaches of Japan, Korea and China, so it comes naturally equipped to



meet at least four of the challenges to survival in the climate of the Coastal Bend. Hybridizers have worked on a fifth characteristic, the ability to tolerate high heat and humidity, and one delightful result is *Rosa rugosa* 'Sarah Van Fleet.'

Rugosa means wrinkled, and the pale green leaves of 'Sarah Van Fleet' are deeply lined. The stems that bear the leaves carry stout thorns every inch or so, except at the base of the plant, where the thorns form such a dense cover that this rose might be worth trying in cut ant territory. The mature size of 'Sarah Van Fleet' is 6-8' x 6-8', and it can be kept in a rough fountain shape with only an occasional light

pruning.

Flowering begins in early spring and continues through the summer into late fall. The roses are a soft pink, double, cupped and very fragrant. When the flowering season is over, large hips (seed pods) provide fall color. 'Sarah' does not seem to be susceptible to black spot or insect pests of any kind and never needs spraying.

But fragrant, beautiful flowers over a long season of bloom and low maintenance are only half the story of this fabulous rose. Thanks to the attributes of its forbears, 'Sarah Van Fleet' is a rose that can be grown very close to salt water.

Seaside gardeners know that wind-driven salt water in the absence of rainfall does the most damage to plants. 'Sarah Van Fleet' will suffer damage from a direct saltwater lashing, but it recovers quickly, putting out new growth in short order. Most roses require some shelter from strong winds, but a rugosa will thrive in a completely exposed position. Ordinary salt spray and constant wind do no harm.



If you decide to try 'Stella Van Fleet,' 'Sir Thomas Lipton,' 'Therese Bugnet,' or another of the heat-tolerant hybrid rugosas, plant it in a well-drained, airy location in full sun. Dig the hole deep enough to include some well-rotted cow manure or compost at the bottom, then fill in with existing soil or good-quality landscaper's mix and water well. Keep the plant watered until it is well established, then water it only in periods of extended drought.



And on Valentine's Day or thereafter, wave your pruners at it, skip the feeding and call for someone to peel you a grape. Rugosas can be pampered to death, but not you!



Dec 8, 2008 - Welcoming Newly Certified Master Gardeners from the Class of 2008.

Left to right - Back Row: Judge Burt Mills, Presenter, New Master Gardeners: Susanne Scott, Colleen Foreman, AgriLife Extension Agent - Amy Freeman. Front Row: Loretta Brandt, Anita Garrett-Roe, Mike McClure, Sally Moore, Robert Moore.



AgriLife Extension Master Gardener Class of 2008 Graduation - Dec 8, 2008

Left to right, back row: Judge Burt Mills, Presenter, Graduates: John Jenkins, Patrice Gorski, Jim Elder, Mary Ann Davis, Susanne Scott, Gail Bergen, Colleen Foreman, Susan Thompson, Carol Spangler, Darla Cassel, AgriLife Extension Agent - Amy Freeman. Front row, left to right: Loretta Brandt, Anita Garrett-Roe, Sally Gale, Christine Grohman, Mike McClure, Sally Moore, Robert Moore. Graduates not pictured are Ray Ahlers, Ann Schick, Brenda Hutchins, and Robert Field.

January in Pictures

Everybody grab your cameras!! Send your photos to marsha.hendrix@thc.state.tx.us. We'll keep an eye on what's going on.



Kickin' off the New Year



Don your hats for Donor Drive



Thank you to Marilyn Vaughan for these submissions.



Hunting for Hidden Gardens

Around the State

The South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center offers its third WINTER LECTURE SERIES for Texas winter visitors and area residents.

Guest speakers will present unique perspectives on regional environmental, agricultural and horticultural topics from 10 to 11:30 a.m., **Wednesdays, in February**, in the Visitors Center, 8545 S. Staples. Lecture Topics are:

February 4 - Invasive Species: Threats to Local Habitat

February 11 - The Art of Bonsai

February 18 -Raising Butterflies

February 25 -Lore & Legends of Texas Wildflowers

Cost is General Admission only: \$5 Adults; \$4 Seniors (60), Active Military, College Students. STBGNC members are free. For reservations or further information, call 361/852-2100.

Creating Wildlife Habitat Landscapes Seminar Botanical Gardens & Nature Center-February 21

The South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center presents a seminar, *Creating Wildlife Habitat Landscapes*, from 10 –11:30 am, Saturday, February 21, in the Gardens & Nature Center Visitors Center, 8545 S. Staples.

Master Gardener/Master Naturalist Ernie Edmundson will show students how to transform their backyards into lush, colorful habitats for birds and butterflies by landscaping with native & adapted plants. The program will be followed by a Walk along the Bird & Butterfly Trail. Seminar fees are \$6, \$3.50 members, including admission. For seminar reservations, call 361-852-2100.

Blacklock's Birds of the Texas Coastal Bend-101 Botanical Gardens & Nature Center-March 7

A short course for beginning birders, with acclaimed birder, naturalist and author **Gene Blacklock** of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, will be offered Saturday, March 7. The lecture will be 8:45 to 11:30 a.m., with a fieldtrip 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Students will study some of the more than 450 known bird species in South Texas. Tuition, is \$25, \$22 for Botanical Gardens & Nature Center members, and includes general admission. **Prepayment must accompany registration**, by March 4. Class maximum is 30. For more information, call 361/852-2100.

Seminar on 'Bulbs you don't have to Dig Up' held at Botanical Gardens & Nature Center March 14

There are many easy bulb plants which grow successfully in South Texas that you actually can leave in the ground year-round! Master Gardener John Gilbreath, who specializes in daylily and amaryllis gardens, will tell you which bulb plants you don't have to dig up for the winter, and share hints about their long-term care, at a seminar from 10 to noon, Saturday, March 14. Gilbreath will discuss Narcissi, Crocuses, Spider Lilies, Crinum, Hurricane Lilies, Iris, Gladiolas, Rain Lilies and more. Class fee is \$6, \$3.50 members, and includes Gardens & Nature Center admission. Bulb-related door prizes will be given at end of the class. For reservations, call 361-852-2100.

Botanical Gardens, San Patricio Water District, Master Gardeners introduce new Rainwater Harvesting Workshop -March 28

From drenching rains to killer droughts, South Texas experiences nearly every moisture extreme. Come sun or soaker, students enrolled in the new *Rainwater Harvesting* workshop will learn how to take advantage of those rainy spells, storing up free fresh water for landscape, vegetable garden or greenhouse for the dry period bound to follow. Held from 9:30 to 3:30 pm, Saturday, March 28, this water resource conservation workshop also is sponsored by the *San Patricio Municipal Water District* and *Nueces Master Gardeners*. A lecture in the Visitors Center begins the day, followed by students constructing their own take-home rainwater harvesting barrels in the Rose Pavilion. Workshop fee is \$20 per student, which includes Botanical Gardens admission. Class maximum is 20. To register, call Texas AgriLife Extension Service, 361-767-5217.

Hot New Plants & Perennial Favorites Seminar at Gardens & Nature Center -March 21

Want more flash in your landscape? At this seminar from 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, March 21, landscape designer Kathy Hubner, Gill's Landscape Nursery, will discuss both tried-and-true favorite perennials, and the newest plants on the market--for color and curb appeal. Class fees are \$6, \$3.50 members, and includes Gardens & Nature Center admission. For reservations, call 361/852-2100.

2009 Texas Master Gardener State Conference - April 23-24 & 25, 2009

Marshall, Texas. Make plans to join us for the 2009 Texas Master Gardener State Conference, that will be held in beautiful East Texas. The conference will feature world class azaleas, dogwood and crape myrtles, as well as unique bed & breakfast establishments, just to name a few. This year, something new, the Earth Kind Rose Workshop, an all-day session will be presented the day before the '09 conference and will feature some of the most renowned experts in the Earth Kind rose field!! Information on registration for this workshop will be added to the regular registration form, come a day earlier and don't miss-out on this added feature!

Harrison County Master Gardener Association c/o Extension Office, 102 West Houston, Marshall, TX. 75670 (903) 935-8413 See this link for more information: <http://tcaaa.tamu.edu/09statemeeting.htm>

February 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 9 am MG Meeting 10:30 am Hidden Gardens Tour Fundraising	4	5	6 8-11am Green Acres Garden Day 10:30 am Landscape Committee	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 <i>County Holiday— Extension Office Closed</i>	17 12-1:00 pm Brown Bag 1:30 pm MG Board of Directors Meeting	18 8-11am Green Acres Garden Day	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 MG Hours Due Today