



Can You Dig It

Newsletter of the Piney Hills Master Gardeners of Louisiana

Publisher Kathy Love

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Trails & Trellises Garden Tour Offers a Full Day of Activities

For an enjoyable day of wandering through soul-stirring gardens and the opportunity to hear a very entertaining speaker, you will not want to miss the 3rd Annual *Trails & Trellises* Garden Tour. Presented by the Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners on May 17, 2008 in Minden, Louisiana from 9am until 4pm, this year's tour offers three charming Minden gardens to stroll through, a plant sale, and new this year, visitors will be able to attend two motivating lectures by gardening personality, Felder Rushing, who will be speaking at Minden's First United Methodist Church at 11am and 1:30pm.

Trails & Trellises Chairman, Marjorie Thomas, suggests that you get an early start the morning of the tour as there is so much to see. Visit the gardens as you wish between 9 am and 4 pm. You need not visit in any particular order. Guides will be available at each garden to answer your questions and assist you as necessary.

When you visit the garden of Jim and Lynn Ritchie at 417 Garrison Trail, be sure to walk through Lynn's wonderful knot garden and as you stroll the grounds, admire her use of vines to frame doorways and paths to create sheltered entrances. You'll find the plant sale in the Ritchie's back yard. Here will be plants propagated and grown by Master Gardeners and offered for sale to you. Proceeds from the plant sale and the Tour itself will be used to benefit projects of the Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners.

The garden of Master Gardener Melba Love at 1304 Drake Drive is a woodland delight. Take your time as you wander through the lovely garden and see the magic that Melba has worked. Follow the rushing stream and discover the pond filled with at least twenty goldfish! Then sit and rest a spell and enjoy a bit of Master Gardener hospitality as you enjoy a refreshing drink and tasty cookies.

A two for one will be found at Judy and Bill Bryant's garden located at 711 and 715 Lewisville Road. Located between two houses owned by the Bryants, you will find a serene setting filled with perennials and potted plants overflowing with color and fragrance. Pathways lead you through the garden to a peaceful sitting area on the brick patio or by the water garden filled with lotus and water lilies. This garden shows a true love of gardening that you will not want to miss!

You'll want to find your way to the First United Methodist Church at 903 Broadway for Felder Rushing's 11 am lecture "*Passalong Plants – Durable 21st Century Beauties from Grandmother's Garden.*" Felder is a 10th generation Southern gardener and the author of over a dozen books including *Passalong Plants* honored in 1994 by the Gardeners Writers Association as the "best written" garden book in the country), *Taylor's Guide to Landscaping in the South*, *Scarecrows*, *The Better Homes and Gardens Junior Gardening Book*, and *Can't Miss Container Gardening*. Books will be available for purchase and may be available for autographs. During the break between lectures take advantage of the delicious box lunches that will be offered for sale at a cost of \$5. At 1:30pm Felder's topic will be "*Grow Anything*

IN Anything – Unusual Container Gardens for Everyday Gardeners.

Rushing lives in Jackson, Mississippi where he writes two weekly columns for the state wide *Clarion Ledger* and twice monthly for the *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, and hosts a live, call-in radio program every Tuesday morning on Mississippi Public Broadcasting, with co-host Dr. Dirt. He has appeared on the Discovery Chanel, HGTV, ETV, and has taken a TV crew to European gardens.

His off-beat garden concepts have been used in several garden shows around the country, including the top award-winning design at the 1997 Philadelphia Flower Show and the Smithsonian Institute Folk Festival in Washington, D.C. He also helped design the Children's Garden at Disney's Epcot Center in Orlando, and the 3,000 square foot butterfly house at the Jackson Zoo.

Door prizes have been generously donated by area businesses. Sign up for drawings at the church. Drawings will be before and after each of Felder's lectures. You need not be present to win. Please patronize these contributing businesses which are listed on your ticket. Be sure to shop at the following stores and thank them for their support:

- ❖ Ace Hardware, 807 Homer Road, Minden
- ❖ Butterfly Garden, 201 Murrell Street, Minden
- ❖ Cone's Farm & Garden, 221 East Union Street, Minden
- ❖ Culpepper Landscaping, Pine Street, Minden
- ❖ Graces Garden, 247 Bossier Street, Heflin
- ❖ Green Acres Nursery, 177 Reynolds Road, Arcadia
- ❖ Haughton Farm & Garden, 102 N. Myrtle, Haughton

- ❖ Hilltop Farm & Garden, 860 Hwy 80, East Haughton
- ❖ Minden Farm & Garden 1307 Sibley Road, Minden
- ❖ TG's Nursery, 456 Hwy 531, Minden
- ❖ Twin Oaks Nursery, 630 E. Georgia Avenue, Ruston

And a special thanks to Lynn Warnock Dorsey, Executive Director, Webster Parish Convention & Visitor Center, Minden.

Purchase your tickets in advance for \$10 at the Extension Office at 1202 Homer Road in Minden or call 371-1371 or email Glenda at gcollums@agcenter.lsu.edu. A ticket entitles you to entry to the gardens and lectures. On the day of the Tour tickets may be purchased for \$12 at any of the gardens or at the church.

So put on your sun hat and your comfortable shoes and enjoy a day in Minden on May 17, 2008. The Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners await you with anticipation. As with most gardeners, they love to share gorgeous gardens and their knowledge of plants and gardening. We hope to see you there!!

Submitted by Glenda Collums

Buds & Blooms 2008 Another Successful Year

"Wow, we had a great gardening seminar. I would like to thank my committee:

*Speaker Setup and MC - Liz Wilson
Raffle - Kay Elzen
Handouts - Mary Anna Perryman
Free Seeds - Debby Reggio and Jan Bockhaus
Advertisement - Gayle Walker
Refreshments - Sue Patton*

Facilities - Linda Berry
Slide Show - Glenda Collums

And a Big thank you to all the members that volunteered to help with these committees. Without your help Buds and Blooms would not be such a wonderful success every year. We raised \$514.25 to be used as awards for the 4-H Gardening Contest. We had some great speakers this year: Celia Jones of Sisters Bulb Farm, Denyse Cummins-LSU AgCenter Horticulturist, Susan Breeland the Gourd Lady, and our own Kay Boykin and Sarena Cox. Thank all of you for giving up a Saturday and coming to share your knowledge of gardening with us.

I need some topics for next year. If there is something that you would like to learn more about, please e-mail me and I will try and find a speaker for that topic, or if you know someone already give me their name and phone number. If there is someone that would like to work with me on the next Buds & Blooms as Co-Chairperson and take over as Chairperson for the following year, please let me know.

Thank you again for all the hard work and for being such a great group of people.

***Sincerely,
Judy Burge***

Notes from Buds & Blooms

As director of the Buds & Blooms gardening seminar for the third year in a row, Master Gardener Judy Burge out did herself! The annual gardening seminar presented by the Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners on Saturday, February 9, 2008 went off without a hitch. Master Gardener Liz Wilson stood as emcee again this year and was as entertaining as usual.

On the menu of speakers, our own Denyse Cummins spoke with her usual flair and abundant horticultural knowledge on hydrangeas....”**Hydrangeas-Not Your Grandma’s Flower!**”



Denyse had these pointers to offer:
For *Hydrangea macrophylla*-Mophead hydrangea

- Prune right after blooming because flowers are made in the buds on the stems the previous fall. Don't try to control size.
- To change color from pink to blue, dissolve a teaspoon of aluminum sulfate per gallon of water and water the plant monthly. To change to pink, add a handful of lime around the root system the previous fall. Repeat every 3 years.

For *Hydrangea quercifolia*-Oakleaf hydrangea

- Don't prune! If you must, prune in late winter.

For *Hydrangea arborescens*-Wild or Smooth hydrangea

- Prune down to 6-8" tall in late winter to force new growth (blooms on new wood formed this year).

Susan Breeland, affectionately called “The Gourd Lady,” of Susan Breeland Gourds is a self taught Folk and Fine Crafts artist. She has done workshops for old and young alike sharing her love of the arts. If you didn't make it to her seminar, you missed a treat.



Susan spoke on “*Gourds—Not Your Usual Work of Art*”. Gourds will need all

summer to mature. If you cut them too soon, they will spoil. When the stems turn brown or after a good frost, the gourds can be cut away from the vine leaving the stem on the gourd. Store them in an elevated space outside. They may need as much as six months drying time. For seed to grow your own, she suggested contacting the American Gourd Society. They have a web site at www.americangourdsociety.org. There is a lot of information on this site and they have a magazine you can subscribe to. Susan demonstrated how to clean the gourds and what tools to use to cut designs. Susan also has a website with photos of her creations. Check it out at www.susanbreelandgourds.com. Who would have ever thought that a lowly gourd could become a work of art? I just know you will want to grow some gourds and at least make a birdhouse!!

Following Susan Breeland, was the ever delightful, Celia Jones, of Sisters Bulb Farms presenting “*Heirloom Bulbs*”. Celia needed no introduction. Her name is synonymous with daffodils. Who hasn’t walked the fields of Sisters Bulb Farm in the spring and gloried in the thousands of yellow and white blossoms!! Celia stated that most pre-1940 cultivars are usually classified as ‘heirloom daffodils’.



Early bloomers for our area are the Campernelle (*N. x odorus*), the Lent Lily (*N. pseudonarcissus*), and the Sweetie (*N. jonquilla*). I believe the small, fragrant ‘Sweetie’ is among Celia’s favorites! It has dark green, reed-like foliage and grows 6 to 10 inches tall. It grows well in wet or dry areas and does very well in our hot summers.....surely a plus for us!

Some other no fail varieties for our area are Golden Harvest, Fortune, February Gold, and Texas Star Jonquil.

Celia recommended Brent & Becky’s Bulbs in Gloucester, Virginia as well as the Southern Bulb Company in Golden, Texas as good places to find bulbs. Both have web sites..... www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com and www.southernbulbs.com.

One tip that Celia offered that a lot of people might not be aware of is to NOT follow package directions when planting your bulbs. In our area, plant your bulbs at a depth of the length of the bulb. If you plant them 6 to 8 inches deep, you have effectively buried them!

Last, but not least in our morning of gardening education, was “*A Fairy Garden!*” presented by Master Gardeners Sarena Cox and Kay Boykin. Sarena described as Kay demonstrated how to put together a fairy garden. Begin by choosing low and slow growing plants with the same light and water requirements. Herbs are a good choice.



A container for your garden can be a terra cotta pot,

a large pot saucer, a large bowl pot.....anything that strikes your fancy that has good drainage and is long-lasting. A good potting mixture for your garden is 2 parts sterilized soil, 1 part peat moss or compost and 1 part perlite.

Fill your container half full of the potting mixture and place your plants. Now comes the really fun part! Create your landscape. This can be done in many ways. Use pea gravel to make a winding path. Add a trellis, chair, wheel barrow and, of course, a fairy!
Submitted by Glenda Collums

Growing Herbs: a Sensory Experience

Although flowers are pretty and some smell sweet, to me there is nothing like the sights, sounds, and especially the smells of a walk in an herb garden. The sweet smell of basil, the clean freshness of flat-leaf parsley, and the sharp, relaxing scent of lavender form a magical connection to a past where herbs were used not only to season foods, but also to heal wounds, relieve pain, and pleasantly scent our surroundings. Herbs have not changed much since ancient times. In these fast-paced, ever-changing times, it is comforting to know that these plants have remained an unchanging source of pleasure and health

Herbs can also have wonderful textures; the velvet of lamb's ears, the soft springy touch of thyme, or the resinous feel of rosemary, make the day a little brighter. And the sounds! No garden is complete without the buzzing of bees and the whirring of hummingbirds as they feed on the herbal blooms. Pollinators are especially attracted to the flowers of herbal plants and are very welcome in my garden. Planting herbs under

my tomatoes and peppers assures that the seeds I save for next year's crop are viable. This keeps the bees and me happy.

Why herbs, though? Is it a natural curiosity to now more about the workings of Nature? The interrelationships among insects, plants, and people are endlessly fascinating. Or is it because I love flavorful food and am always looking for new ways to season an old dish? Well, there is that!

Regardless of the reasons, growing these magical plants has formed the basis for a lifetime of discovery and years of joyful growing and delicious harvests. If you choose to add a few herbs to your garden, I wish you joy in the experience.

Submitted by Mary McKinney

Editor's note: Mary and her husband Bill are the owners of Yellow Pine Inn Bed & Breakfast in Sibley.

Spring time is definitely in blossom at Evelyn Dandridge's street-side garden. It brings delight to all who drive down Elm Street.



A Note from the Editor

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed. You may submit an article or comment by contacting Kathy Love at 318 377-6394 or love7190@bellsouth.net.