



Master Gardener

Vol. 10 No. 10, October, 2005
News for Delaware County Master Gardeners



Calendar

Tuesday, October 18th

**MG Meeting—
Smedley Park 7:00 pm**

Tuesday, November 1st

**MG Board Meeting
Smedley Park 7:00 pm**

Second Saturday—November 12th

*Holiday Ornaments—10:00 AM
Smedley Park*

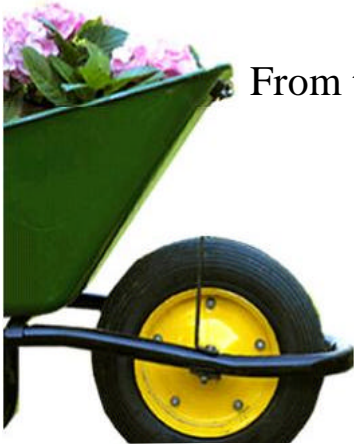
Wednesday, October 19th

MG's are invited by North Wilmington Garden Club to attend a lecture on *Global Warming*—Speaker, Chad Tolman Brandywine Library, Foulk Road in Delaware at 7:00 pm

Tuesday, November 15th

**MG Meeting—
Smedley Park 7:00 pm**

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From the Coordinator: *Linda Barry*

We had a wonderful day for our first *Fall Fest*, and I thank all of the Master Gardeners who helped make it a successful event. Congratulations to Alyce Zellers and the many volunteers who planned

and carried out all of the day's activities. The evaluations were very positive.

The Teaching Gardens are wonderful this year. Thanks to the co-chairs and to all of the volunteers who have worked so hard. It was an especially difficult September, but you have managed to keep them looking great. The *Fall Fest* provided an opportunity to showcase them.

Thanks to all of the Master Gardeners who have sent or entered volunteer hours. If you have not reported yours, please do so as soon as possible. In December I will send out notices to Master Gardeners who have not reported 20 hours of service in 2005. This is in preparation for compiling our 2006 mailing list. If you are unable to complete the hours, but would like to remain in the Master Gardener organization, you may request 'inactive' status. You can remain inactive for up to three years.

We are accepting nominations for Secretary for 2006 -2007. Tara Clarke has done an outstanding job in this position during the last two years. Her term expires in December. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please contact Carl Pfeiffer, chair of the nominating committee. Elections are held at the January general meeting.

We are planning our Holiday Party for December. Please put this date on your calendar. We will be recognizing 'Perennial Master Gardeners' –

those who have served as volunteers for 10 years. We will also recognize members with 500 and 1000 volunteer hours.

We have a wonderful class of very enthusiastic Master Gardener candidates this year. They have completed half of their classes. We move to Chester County for October. If you still need additional advanced training hours for this year, you are welcome to sit in on the classes.



MG OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

President: Alyce Zellers
 Vice President: Kathy Hornberger
 Treasurer: Ken Paulsell
 Secretary: Tara Clarke
 Hours Keeper: Chantal Wildman
 Coordinator: Linda Barry—610-690-7669

Committee Chairs:

Newsletter : Barbara Smith
 Mentoring : Lisa Augustine
 Field Trips: Gerry Eunson
 Social Events: Jennifer Dean
 Arbor Day : Mary Sambor
 Elsie Mueller
 Garden Select : Robin Queenan
 Gail Brewer
 Flower Show: Gayla McCluskey
 Hort Therapy: Delilah Fordes
 Hortline: Liana Bauerle
 Home Gardener's School:
 Diana Breen
 Ken Paulsell
 Speakers Bureau: Joe Daniels
 MG Recruitment: Marty Roelandt

NEWSLETTER STAFF:

Editor: Barbara Smith
 Web Designer: Kathy Moyer
 Committee: Cynthia Sabatini, Linda Barry, Joe Daniels, Carolyn DiPaulo, Barbara Meahl, Carl Pfeiffer, Arlene Pugh, Tina Coleman, Jane Baserga, Christine Gradel, Kathy Hornberger & Marion Nelson
 Web site address: <http://delaware.extension.psu.edu/MG/>

Cooperative extension - Email: DelawareExt@psu.edu

Are your houseplants in need of some “desperate” help or maybe just your indoor gardening skills. Whatever the case. . . Keep reading to find out some easy steps to make the transition from garden to house foolproof.

Our extremely warm summer and fall have lulled us into leaving our prized houseplants on an extended summer vacation! Wherever your “Wisteria Lane” happens to be, its that time of year when gardeners should start moving tropical and non-hardy plants indoors for the winter. When the nighttime temperatures dip below 45 degrees, many tropical plants suffer damage.

How to master the task quickly and efficiently takes just a few steps:

1. Lift the plant out of the pot, pick off any slugs, then put it back in.
2. Now is a good time to re-pot plants, if needed. Take the plant out of the pot to see if it is root-bound. Feel free to trim roots if they are tangled. Usually going up one container size is plenty.
3. Prune the plant in the shape you want it.
4. Whether or not the plants are showing signs of insects, I automatically spray every plant with Neem Oil, an organic insecticide, on the top and bottom of the leaves (or you can use an insecticidal soap).
5. Continue to check all the plants over the next 3 to 4 days. If any signs of insects persist, spray again and wait a few more days before bringing the plant indoors.
6. Indoors, place plants near a bright window, unless they are shade-loving. Don't be surprised if the plant drops some leaves and yellows a bit. It is adjusting to its new environment.

For those scraggly or sad-looking “desperate houseplants”, throw them in the compost pile. If they are insect-ridden. . .bury them in your back-

yard (just kidding). . . But if you do, keep that dirty little secret to yourself. It will give the neighbors one more reason to love their eccentric green thumb gardening neighbor.

Don't forget to wash your windows this fall so that houseplants placed nearby can have maximum sunlight over the winter and you can see all the interesting going-ons up and down your real life Wisteria Lane.

Plants indoors usually do not need to be watered as frequently. Water only when the soil feels dry. Also cut back on fertilizer. Check the plants every few days for insects. If you notice any, place the affected plant under a stream of cold water to get rid of the bugs



If you want a kitchen winter garden, start potting some chives, parsley or sage. If that's not possible, select specimen of plants to hang dry for use in wreaths or dried arrangements. Many smaller pieces of herbs can be used in pot-pourri, vinegars or oils. My favorite is to freeze dry basil for use in sauces over the winter.

If you are interested in reblooming your Christmas cactus for Christmas, stop weekly feedings and during October and November provide darkness for 15 hours a night in a cool place 50° - 60°. Water plants about twice a month. If you are not sure whether you have a Christmas or Thanksgiving cactus (*Schlumbergera*) closely examine their stem segments. Christmas cactus stem segments are wider with scalloped edges. Those of Thanksgiving cactus are smaller and have 2 to 4 pointy teeth on their edges.

Best of luck with bringing those prized specimens inside for the winter and stay tuned for some interesting little secrets about your “desperate houseplants” over the next few months.

Brought to you by . . .that eccentric green thumber, who sees and knows all about “your” desperate houseplants.

HELP WANTED

- ◆ Compost Workshop Merry Place on Glendale Road in Havertown Saturday October 15th 9:00 AM--- followed by a community workday in the gardens until noon.

Thanks, Janae Alberts

- ◆ The brochure for 2nd Saturday 2006 is now ready for mailing. So I am looking for volunteers to prepare the bulk mailing. Those of you who have done it before know it is a big job, but it gets done quickly with enough volunteers. If you can help on Tuesday, October 25 at 1:30 PM please give me a call at 610 328-9963. Thank you all. Barbara Meahl



MERCI BEAUCOUP

When in need, call on the Master Gardeners and they'll be there!

The "Operation Brotherly Love" created by the Salvation Army to help the victims of hurricane Katrina was a huge success. My friend Leigh, who actually started the "ball rolling" was just about speechless, overwhelmed by your generosity.

I have so many people to thank, particularly I want to tip my hat to Joe. With good humor, he spent his Sunday afternoon driving Miss Daisy (ME!) around...(It was the day after my little gardening accident). . . to drop off the donations. And then there is Delilah who went out of her way to buy a lot of lovely outfits for the children, pampers and tons of other clothing items. Also the many generous strangers who came up to her, while she was shopping, offering cash donations; the store manager who extended further discounts for her purchases. Leigh who is the most generous people I have ever met.

It truly brings tears to my eyes thinking of so many acts of kindness just to help people whom we did not even know!

This was an incredible experience for me, I thank you one and all from the bottom of my heart. And let's do it again.

Chantal

Here's two pictures from a picture perfect day—our very 1st Fall Fest.

Getting Started: Gathering Natural Fall Decorations



Two words always come to mind when I decorate: transition and layers. These concepts save time and money. Let's face it, we're all busy and don't

have the energy to create fall and Halloween decorations from scratch. The goal here is to decorate for fall, transition from fall to Halloween, and then take your arrangements one step further into Thanksgiving. The transitions are achieved by adding and eliminating various layers and making the most of the pieces you've invested in.

So where do we begin? There is one place I always turn to for the world's best fall decorations -- the outdoors. Whether you live in the country or the city, natural and beautiful objects abound (for you city dwellers, think local parks and farmers' markets). Here are a few essentials you will need to create fabulous and relatively easy holiday displays:

- Branches. Try to find really interesting shapes and textures (some plain, some with berries, some from evergreens) that will be great for creating various vignettes.
- Leaves. Autumn provides the most beautiful colors. Bring them into your home and tuck into displays.
- Pinecones. These are perfect for fall and can be kept out well into winter!

- Gourds.
- Pumpkins in various sizes (including the minis).
- Indian corn or any other goodies you can find at your local farmers' market.

Copied from iVillage.com

ps—As you're cleaning out your beds for Fall—keep in mind that we will need natural items like those men-



tioned above for use in the *Second Saturday* workshop of Holiday Ornaments—November 12th. Items like Pine Cones, seed pods, ribbons,

Grass Teasel & dried flowers will be needed to make the decorations.

Then for the December Wreath-making seminars (yes, there are two) we will need lots & lots of greens. So prune those evergreens and drop off your cuttings at the Environmental Center before December 10th classes.

SECOND SATURDAYS FOR 2005...

November 12th—Holiday Ornaments
December 10th—Wreath Making

All programs are held at Smedley Park and run from 10AM to Noon. Cost is \$10 per person for the November and December workshops that covers materials for a take-home project.