Dear Collin County Master Gardeners,

It’s hot out there. We’re all taking a bit of a breather from our outdoor work (at least in the heat of the day), so this is the perfect time to think of different ways you can get involved with our association. We have some great leaders out there, working their hearts out, and it would be wonderful to add to their ranks. Then maybe those at the top wouldn’t be working quite so hard!

Not only will you be helping out your own association, you will meet interesting, friendly people and learn a lot along the way. I can’t say enough about how much I enjoy working with all of you, and I know you’ll have the same experience when you become more active within the organization.

We have executive committee nominations underway right now, and this is the time to throw your name in the hat. Or nominate someone you think could make a good officer. There are also many projects you can take on, such as helping out with speaker’s bureau, information tables, junior master gardeners, etc. If you want to head up one of these projects by coordinating volunteers and needs, there is ample opportunity for that, too. Check into all the projects by visiting www.ccmgatx.org/Association/Projects.asp.

In short, the possibilities and needs are endless. Your talents, wisdom, enthusiasm, and time are valuable commodities, and I know that. If everyone steps up their involvement at least one notch, we will be meeting our community’s needs and coming together as a more cohesive group.

I’ve always said gardeners are among the nicest people you can meet. Get out there and meet more of your pleasant peers through our association. We’re counting on you!

Sincerely,
Greg Church, Ph.D.
County Extension Agent - Horticulture
**The Importance of BEEing in Collin County**

By Dawn Oldfield

“How doth the little busy bee,
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day,
From every opening flower?”

*Isaac Watts*

By the thousands they hover in the air, diving and rising in the breeze, swaying in perfect choreography with Indian blanket, horsemint and other wildflowers in the field. A gentle nudge and stern buzz gets my attention, hinting I am too close to the hive and to move along, please. Similar to people, honeybees don’t like their personal space invaded.

Several hives of honeybees call this idyllic setting home, along with the Horacio and Shirley Acevedo family. Members of the Collin County Hobby Bee Keepers Association (CCHBA), the Acevedos are among the 100 or so beekeepers in Collin County.

To give me a better understanding of honeybees and their place in our world, I sought out area experts to enlighten me about our honey-making friend. I began with Shirley Acevedo. Her passion for honeybees and education is evident as she patiently shared with me honeybee history and honeybee here and now.

We began with a crash course - Honeybee 101. *Propolis* is a substance bees create to use as a caulk sealant for the hive (hello, local DIY store…this could solve my shower dilemma)! It is also said to be medicinal and antibacterial for bees and humans. A *skep* is a dome-shaped basket once used to keep bees in. With the invention of the modern day hive, the *skep* is now mainly used for decorative purposes. One worker bee will only produce 1/12 of a teaspoon of raw honey in her lifetime. Bees are less likely to sting if you wear white.

According to Shirley, “People have a big misunderstanding that bees are going to attack you or bore into your house. Usually they are just on the move, searching for a new home or plants to pollinate. Bees are not destructive. They take advantage of existing opportunities to get into your structure.” A hole or small gap is all it takes for a colony of bees to move in and make a hive. “They usually pick places where there is no insulation – a very common place is between the first and second floor.” Under the eaves and chimneys are also popular habitats.

This husband and wife team began keeping bees in 1990 as a hobby, and went full-time in 2000 when Horatio retired. Proprietors of ACE BEES, the Acevedos specialize in professional removal of bees from bushes, trees, homes, and other structures. When possible, the bees are relocated to a permanent hive. Raw wildflower honey, beeswax, pollen, and beekeeping services are part of ACE BEES, too.

Shirley also shares, “People don’t realize how valuable honeybees are to our food supply.” Your 4th of July picnic wouldn’t be the same without watermelon. Shortcake without berries? Cobbler without peaches? No cucumber.

*(Continued on page 3)*
bers? No pickles. Don’t even tease about the tomato! Heart-healthy California almonds are 100 percent dependent on honeybees. Approximately 90 crops in Texas rely on the honeybee for pollination.

I had the pleasure of meeting Rachael Seida, a lovely young lady from Wylie, Texas, who is the 2008 Texas Honey Queen and now also wears the 2008 American Honey Queen crown. Official spokesperson for the Texas Beekeepers Association, Rachael promotes all aspects of beekeeping. She is available for personal appearances and to give educational presentations. According to Rachel, there are over 300 varieties of honey! “Honeybees collect from one source at a time. In Collin County their favorite nectar sources include alfalfa, wildflowers, cotton and horse-mint.”

Rachael says, “One-third of food in the United States is insect pollinated. 80 percent of that is done by honeybees. While beekeeping is one of Texas’ smallest agricultural industries, the state still ranks 6th nationally in sales of honey and other hive products, such as beeswax and pollen.”

Recent news reports have spread alarm that honeybees are in danger of extinction. According to Rachael, “Honeybee Decline or Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) is a worldwide problem. A beekeeper suddenly discovers where there were once thousands of honeybees in his hives only a few hundred remain. No cause has been identified, but pesticides, diseases and predators are suspects. This has happened in the past – a kind of cycle – but this time it hasn’t stopped. Some commercial beekeepers have lost nearly 80 percent of their hives due to CCD.”

It’s a very disturbing trend.

Honeybees tend to swarm 3-5 times per year. Late February through early August are the most common months. If you see bees, be cautious and respectful of them. A honeybee dies after it stings someone…and it knows this. They only sting to protect their home. If you have problems with bees, ask for help so they can be moved to a new environment. Contact a local beekeeper, local AgriLIFE Extension Agent, or pest control company.

Shirley Acevdeo advises that if you do get stung by a honeybee, scrape off the stinger. Don’t pluck or pull, or it will squeeze the venom sack. And, “if anyone ever gets stung and has trouble breathing, dial 911. Don’t ever try to drive yourself or someone to the hospital. It only takes 10 minutes for the throat to swell if you have a severe reaction.” There are plenty of home remedies for stings. Pastes of baking soda or meat tenderizer, or even a penny taped over the sting are said to neutralize the venom.

So, the next time you swat at a honeybee, give it a second thought. She’s (yes, “she.” 97 percent of bees in the hive are female) flying low either in search of flowers for nectar, or to pollinate, or to find a new home. Instead of slapping, grow some of their favorite plants.
and watch one of Mother Nature’s miracles at work.

**HONEY Butter**  
(Source: Rachael Seida – American Honey Queen)  
4 Sticks butter or margarine, softened  
½ cup HONEY  
1 tsp vanilla (optional)  
Whip butter until light and fluffy. Slowly add the HONEY and vanilla. Adding the honey too rapidly makes the mixture lose its thick, fluffy consistency. Whip 2 to 3 minutes longer. Cover and refrigerate. Stores well.

About the Author: Dawn Oldfield is a class of 2004 CCMG, our group’s public relations coordinator, and is passionate about roses, water conservation, and traveling the gardens of the world.

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**Answers to Mystery Plant**

![Images of plants A, B, C, D, E, F]

Many thanks to everyone who responded to our “Mystery Plant” quiz last month. Mary Nell Jackson and Janet Smith came through the most correct answers!  
A) Possum Haw Holly (in Gruene, Texas)  
B) *Lysimachia clethroides* “Gooseneck loosestrife”  
C) *Cupha varia*  
D) Flowering Quince (also in Gruene, Texas)  
E) Yellow Nandina  
F) *Vigna caracalla*, Corkscrew flower

*\*“Mystery Plant Quiz Results\*"
Junior Master Gardener Update

Green Elementary Environmental Club Completes JMG Program

By Adele Bouget

A group of 3rd - 5th grade students at Green Elementary School in Allen completed the requirements to earn their Junior Master Gardener Certificate, Golden Ray Series, Wildlife Gardener. The group met once a month, and 12-15 students attended on a regular basis.

For the community service portion of the program, the group adopted a city garden near the school at Green Park. The students selected mostly Texas Superstars for the garden. The city provided the plants, and the students did the planting. They have a great sense of achievement, and some have taken their families to the garden to do some desperately needed weeding.

Next year, the group may extend the membership to 1st to 6th grade students, so the program will need to be modified accordingly. Activities will have to be planned for younger grades to accomplish and, at the same time, be challenging and interesting enough for the older kids. We will probably have opportunities for the older students to plan and lead some of the activities. There has been positive feedback from parents, and the participants seem to really enjoy it and got a lot out of it. When I'd run into them in the hallways, they were constantly asking me when the next meeting was going to be held. Hopefully word is getting around that the Environmental Club is a fun activity, and the group will be a little larger next year.

Marge Bryan, MG, teaches the students about butterflies, just before we head out to plant the garden.

About the Author: Adele Bourget is a class of 2004 Master Gardener and editor of eMinders.
Ajuga
By Nancy Harmon

I’m a huge proponent of Ajuga, or Bugleweed. If you are looking for a hardy ground cover, this plant is for you. It is a member of the mint family and is invasive, but easily controlled. It grows well in average soil and can also survive in clay or sandy earth.

Each spring, ajuga presents purple flower spikes that often last for several weeks. Ajuga is a colorful addition to any landscape with foliage that ranges from greens, to bronzes, and multi-colors with purplish backs.

Spreading can be contained by edging with a shovel in the spring and mid-summer. I have incorporated ajuga in several areas in my yard where nothing else survives. When it becomes too invasive, I simply pull it out. But the lush, dark green to purple carpet that ajuga provides is beautiful.

Care of ajuga is simple. It prefers partial to full shade, although it can tolerate full sun. Plants will tend to be smaller and less healthy if planted in the hot sun. It grows to 2 to 5 inches tall, and each plant can spread 12 to 18 inches. Ajugas do quite well when left alone. Be sure to water during the hottest months, but do not let stand in soggy conditions.

To propagate ajuga, divide each plant with roots attached and plant immediately. There’s no need for rooting in water first. These plants spread by sending out runners and can grow over rocks and borders. ♦

Help for Homeowner Associations!

The Design Committee has added a section to the Collin County Master Gardeners Association web site under “Design Ideas.”

Homeowners Associations often ask for landscape ideas and can be directed to this information written for them. Basic Design Principals, HOA Design Plans and an HOA Plant List should answer many of their questions. The plans include ideas for corner entries and other common entry shapes. The plant list gives suggestions which include mature size and light requirements.

In the future we will add other designs to this site as well as locations of existing landscapes to visit. The Design Committee would like to thank the Web Site Committee for their help in making this information available to the people of Collin county.

See ccmgatx.org/design/hoalandscapes.asp for the information.

Gardening in Texas in the summer is like kicking a fire ant mound. You know you’ll probably get bitten, but you just can’t help yourself.

-Katherine Ponder
Winter Squash Starts in the Summer Garden
By Tamara Galbraith

Growing winter squash can be a test of patience – they seem to takes ages to mature and are susceptible to many different pests and diseases. But, the taste of these nutritious vegetables is so worth the effort. Besides, visions of sharing gorgeous orange and gold baked squash dishes at your next Thanksgiving dinner may be just the thing to chase away the end of summer gardener’s blues, brought on by our inevitable triple digit temperatures.

So when August rolls around, start your winter squash seeds. These include acorn, butternut, and hubbard types, as well as pumpkins and decorative gourds. (Always check the seed packet growing instructions for maturity information; however, some pumpkins can take up to 100 days to develop and will therefore need to be planted in mid-July if Halloween is your target date.)

Some TAMU and All-American Selections-recommended winter squash varieties are:
- Early Butternut (AAS) - Mature fruit are tan; excellent flavor and texture; stores well; viney but not overly vigorous.
- Waltham Butternut (AAS) - Large, tan fruit; 3 pounds; uniform shape; orange flesh; stores well; vigorous vine.
- Table Ace
- Table King Bush (AAS)
- Vegetable Spaghetti - Fruit is 8 to 10 inches long, 3 pounds; yellow when mature; cooked flesh is greenish-white, spaghetti-like strands; flavor is bland; prolific vine; 90 days; orange-fleshed type also available.

A few of the successfully-tested pumpkin varieties for Texas include Connecticut Field, Spirit Hybrid, Small Sugar, Big Max (or Big Mac), Jack Be Little (ornamental), and Jack O’Lantern.

Plant the seeds 4 feet apart in hills in rows that are 6 feet apart, using a compost-enriched location where you haven’t grown any other cucurbit varieties for at least two years. (Remember, rotating your crops cuts down significantly on potential pest and disease problems.) Once the plants emerge, thin to one plant per hill.

Grow winter squash just as you do summer squash: provide lots of water, sun and compost. As the plants grow, train the vines upward on trellises so there is adequate air circulation around the plant. (If space is limited, try one of the many bush varieties.)

Check regularly for pests such as squash bugs, cucumber beetles, squash vine borers and stink bugs. Control as necessary, but do NOT use pesticides during peak honeybee visitation hours.

All winter squash are pollinated by bees and require 60 to 70 days from pollination to maturity, so if you start your seeds in August, harvest time should hit about mid-October. Delay harvest until the fruit rind is very hard and vines begin to die. (Immature fruit of most varieties are tasteless; however, yellow acorn varieties are edible at all stages of maturity.) Spaghetti squash should turn a golden

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Winter Squash Starts in the Summer Garden

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yellow and banana squash a golden orange when ready to harvest.

Store mature winter squash in a cool, dry place – they will keep for several months. There is no need to store them in the refrigerator. To keep cooked squash in the freezer for future recipe use, follow these steps:

Cut squash into small pieces, remove seeds and peel.

• Cook until soft.
• Mash pulp or put through sieve.
• Cool by placing pan containing squash over crushed ice and stir until cool.

Place in an appropriate freeze bag, or container, with 1/2" headspace; freeze.

Winter squash varieties are rich in Vitamin A (beta-carotene), dietary fiber, folate (folic acid), and potassium. That is…if you plan on eating them. Gourds are included in the winter squash family, but are generally grown for decorative purposes. They are also a little bit trickier to grow due to slow seed germination. Soaking the seeds overnight will hasten the germination process.

There is some great information online about growing gourds from Betty Kent, former President of the Texas Gourd Society at:

http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/Growgourds.html

Tamara Galbraith, Class of 2005, is the CCMGATX.org Webmaster and an avid organic gardener.

Arboretum Trip & Carpooling

“The Masters of Gardening” This fall the Dallas Arboretum is hosting a Field Day for Master Gardeners. We are invited to tour the gardens with our families for free on September 6 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. We will be organizing a carpool for those who want to go together. Look in the eMinders as this date approaches for time and location. Contact Kathleen Brooks in the meantime at brooksjohn@tx.rr.com if you would like to ride with a group.

Mark those Meetings

The speakers for our July General Meeting is Janet Rowe, “The Texas Bee Charmer.” Come on over on July 24 to the Laughlin Hall at the Heard Museum in McKinney. We’ll have social time at 11:30 a.m., and our speaker’s presentation will begin at 12:30 p.m. The next month’s meeting will be on August 21. Watch eMinders for further details.
Wanted: A Few Good Master Gardeners for 2009 Executive Officers
By Glenn Mieritz

The nominating committee is accepting nominations for Executive Officer candidates for 2009.

The Executive Board consists of the elected officers, plus the immediate past president. The officers include President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Volunteer Support Coordinator.

During August and September, and prior to the October General Meeting, a list of eligible nominees is compiled and finalized. This is the time when you can nominate someone, or volunteer yourself. Nominees are presented at the September or October General Meeting. Nominations may still be made by the membership at this time. At the October meeting, the membership will vote on the nominees to determine the new officers. The newly elected Executive Board members will then be installed at the November General Meeting.

Eligible nominees must be certified Master Gardeners in good standing. Interns are not included in this group, but could nominate another Master Gardener, or become a project leader for the coming year.

All of our officers will need to be replaced this fall, due primarily to term limits as outlined in the CCMGA by-laws. We have already received a few nominees’ names, but certainly could use more. Many positions will need to be filled. Let’s get involved!

For more information on board positions, to volunteer, or to nominate another master gardener, feel free to contact anyone on the current executive board or contact Glenn Mieritz, gmieritz@gmail.com. The board position responsibilities are also listed in the CCMGA by-laws. Project Leaders are appointed positions, usually filled with volunteers. For more information on any of the opportunities, please contact one of our board members- Diane Sharp, Janice Miller, Theresa Merritt, Rene Ferguson, Mary Means, Sara Shaffer or Rene Mahoney.

Much Too Much Mint

By Katherine Ponder

I overheard a conversation at Calloway’s earlier this summer from a distraught novice gardener. She was imploring an employee to help her find a plant that could wrest away some garden space from a thriving mint patch. The employee was understanding, sympathetic, and honest to a fault — nothing would overtake a mature mint stand, she said. She recommended digging it all out and vigilantly pulling any regrowth. The customer wouldn’t give up. “What about this?” she said, again and again, grabbing different plants that looked tough. The hapless Calloway’s employee just shook her head each time.

So it goes with mint. A clever Master Gardener from Arizona wrote and illustrated advice on how to plant mint so that it stays where it’s put. It involves a coffee can, consistent monitoring, and intervention if necessary.

Visit http://www.azherb.org/tips/TrapMint.pdf for all the details.
Book Review
By Kathleen Brooks

“Oderwald” is an unusual name. Last January the name came up on the list of keynote speakers for the 2008 Texas Master Gardener Conference. Mulling this over lead to the bookcase and my copy of “Identification, Selection and Use of Southern Plants for Landscape Design.” This textbook was written by Neil Oderwald and James R. Turner (who is not the Jimmy L. Turner at the Dallas Arboretum). Dr. Oderwald wrote this for his classes on landscape design while a professor at Louisiana State University. It describes over 1,000 species of trees, vines, perennials and more, in details of foliage, flower, fruit landscape values and remarks. For example, the remarks about the Night-Blooming Cereus include: “can withstand considerable neglect”, “bloom occurs after dark and lasts for four to six hours.” These gems contain details not available in most sources of information. It is a very interesting read. And, if you have read this far and would like a piece of Night Blooming Cereus, let me know.

At the 2008 Texas Master Gardener Conference last April Neil Oderwald signed my copy of “Identification, Selection and Use of Southern Plants for Landscape Design” before a lecture on “Landscape Design for Small Spaces.” His presentation was educational and entertaining. His Baton Rouge accent and mannerisms were beguiling!

Another book co-authored by Neil Oderwald is “Attracting Birds to Southern Gardens.” This book explains six designs of landscapes and how birds fit into each of them. Photos and descriptions are given for birds that feed on parts of plants. The Cedar waxwing feeds on fruit producing plants such as holly, pyracantha and serviceberry. There are plant recommendations and remarks too. The Maximilian sunflower “does not flower where it receives light at night, such as from a street or safety light.” Interesting to know. And “Some Common Myths about Southern Birds” may surprise you. Number 7 states ”Birds migrate to escape the cold.” Myth buster: Birds leave because cold weather lowers food availability.

Both of these books are available from the public library system. And we should all plan on attending the 2009 Texas Master Gardener Conference in Harrison County on April 23-25,2009. You never know who you might get to meet!
Combating the Wind
By Mary Means

As this article is written, beloved plants are bandied about in gale force winds. Sugar water inside hummingbird feeders sloshes up and down and splashes out onto shrubs and patios, much to the delight of wasps and ants. Barn swallows twirl about in the wind. This has been a particularly windy spring and early summer.

What can be done about the damage of wind? There are some clever ideas out there. Our CCMGA group noticed on our field trip to the Lavender Farm in Royce City that the owners had built a small fenced area in their front yard. The white picket fence had two sides, facing south and west. Delicate flowers bloomed on the inside of the L shape, protected from the harsh winds. Fences can be used as wind breaks. Just be sure to allow for a little air circulation. Otherwise, still air will encourage fungus development.

At the State Conference in Conroe, Texas, the Montgomery County Master Gardeners had erected a canopy under which they were conducting business and dispensing information. The tent was held in place in the wind by gallon jugs filled with water and suspended from the corners of the canopy. Dozens of jugs were being used as ballast to hold down the canopy against the wind.

And what about those hummingbird feeders blowing in the wind? Get a chain or create a chain out of nylon tie straps. Use something with plenty of joints in it so that each joint absorbs some of that wind. Also, hang a chain below the feeder. The chain dampens oscillation because of its weight, but the wind has little effect on the chain because of its small profile. The feeder still moves, but not as much. The result is less sloshing.

These then are a couple thoughts on coping with the wind. Hold onto your hats, everyone, and have a good summer.

About the Author: Mary Means is a class of 2002 CCMG, secretary for our association, and a delegate to state meetings.

5 Steps to a Greener Green Yard
By Beth Mortensen

Going “green” in the garden is not difficult to do at all! Every environment-conscious action that one does in the yard has a powerful payoff in the function and beauty. One does not have to be a card-carrying tree-hugger to want to put these practices in place – anyone who wants a beautiful, reduced maintenance garden can enjoy being green! Try some or all of the following:

Recycle yard wastes. An obvious benefit here is the reduction of bulk that makes its way into the landfill, but an often overlooked advantage to this practice is the enormous

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benefit to the garden. Consider a forest. The leaves and old branches fall to the ground and are left there to eventually decompose. This process returns to the earth the very nutrients the plants require. No fertilizer is required in a forest. The natural recycling process keeps the plants healthy and vibrant. Leave grass clippings on the lawn so that they can return nutrients to the soil. They will also provide a light layer of mulch which will help moderate the soil’s temperature and moisture. Shred autumn leaves and chip fallen branches to use as mulch for the wintering of plants, or put them in a compost pile.

Compost. The leaves and branches that have been shredded and chipped as described above make a terrific start to an outdoor compost bin. Add to this base most kitchen wastes, and you’ll have a nutrient-rich organic fertilizer. Composting can be as simple as throwing the waste material on a pile in the back yard or in a bin made of chicken wire, or as fancy as a store-bought bin that will do the turning with an easy crank. Most of the manufactured brands will keep rodents at bay and will significantly reduce odors. Worm composting is a great activity that will get children interested in the composting process and the end result (no pun intended) of this project is a powerful macro- and micro-nutrient organic material that does miracles in the garden.

Capture and use rainwater. The earth has a finite amount of water, and as our population grows, it is necessary to examine how this precious resource is utilized. It is not uncommon for people to use up to 50 percent of city water on landscape irrigation. This is wasteful, and plants actually perform much better when managed with rainwater. Rainwater collection is a simple process, and the rewards are numerous. Unlike city-processed water, rainwater is chemical-free, naturally soft, and does not have salts and other minerals commonly found in treated water. Using treated water causes salts and minerals to build up in the soil and negatively impact the plant’s ability to take-up water and nutrients. Rainwater, on the other hand, heals the plants roots by washing away the harmful salts and minerals. Capture rainwater in barrels from guttering downspouts or direct rainfall into a garden.

Use water wisely in the garden. One way to reduce dependence on water in the garden is to choose plants that are satisfied with the local rainfall. Look for native plants and those that have adapted successfully to the local weather conditions. A terrific source for these plants is the Texas SmartScape website which can be found at www.txsmartscape.com. Mulch plants well to lessen the effects of evaporation. If an irrigation system is necessary, consider using drip irrigation which delivers water precisely to the roots of plants with little to no waste. Reduce water-guzzling lawn in the landscape and replace it with a hardscape or a plant bed.

Reduce the use of chemicals in the yard. If some of the above suggestions are put into practice, a reduction in the need for chemicals will naturally occur. Add to that an increase in the use of organics, and it might be surprising how little chemicals are needed at all. The use of compost and the recycling of leaf and grass clippings gives the plants the exact nutrients required, significantly reducing the need for chemical fertilizers. If fertilizers are deemed necessary, opt for the organic, slow-release type. Use Texas natives in the garden and there will be little need for chemical pest or disease management materials. Texas natives have natural resources to fight pests and diseases. A wonderful resource for plants that require little to no chemical intervention is the Texas Superstar Plants website that can be found at www.gotexan.org.
Gardener’s Journal: Moon Gardening
By Mary Nell Jackson

Almost every winter I dream of plans for my moon garden, but spring comes and the heat of summer rushes in before I can get my moon garden planted. I have the spot picked for my nightly summer gazing and sniffing of cool white blossoms. I have lists of plants to buy and a design in my head, but I never get around to it.

The spring pruning and sprucing up take my time in the garden; and when the hot summer winds blow me into the air conditioning, I nap once again with dreams of a moon garden. Enjoying the garden after our labors is a task some gardeners never seem to get around to. For me, however, sitting in my garden after a hard day’s work is inspiring. It shows me a bit of how things should look, much like living in a room before you hang the pictures.

Observation of your plant material is an unspoken teaching tool. A garden should be observed and appreciated from a seating area. I would have never chosen the perfect area for moon gardening if I had not stopped one evening and observed the moon's rising.

A garden planted with only white flowers is pretty by day, but by night it takes on an enchanted look. In the moonlight, the white flowers stand out as if they were lighted themselves. White flowers in the daylight convey a feeling of coolness, but the landscape changes when the moon comes up. Planting a path on both sides with white flowers can create light sans electricity in the moonlight.

“Night gardens have a life of their own,” says Barbara Damrosch, landscape designer, who gardens in Connecticut.

The study of the history of gardens is full of information of moonlight gardens. In 1639 the Mogul Emperor Janhan built a moonlight garden in Delhi, India with jasmine, narcissus, tuberose and lilies. Japanese gardens in the medieval era featured moon gardens with pale rocks or sand, white chrysanthemums, and pools of water to catch the moon's light. Vita Sackville-West had a gray and white garden at Sissinghurst in England, thought to be designed after those of India. A dear elderly gardening friend of mine gave me some white blooming borage seeds that were said to have come from the Sissinghurst garden. I cherish those seeds and plant them sparingly for now.

The design for a moon garden can take any shape, but you should stay within the white flowering category. Many gardeners make their moon gardens round or in the shape of a half moon. The garden at Sissinghurst is square in design and very large. I have plans for mine around a round patio with my fire pit, seems fitting to place it there as I have candlelight and the glow of a nice fire. You should note that partial sunlight will yield partial moonlight when considering a site for your garden.

Some of the plants from my list include:
{all the bloom varieties should be white if possible}

- Potted Gardenias, citrus and Sambac Jasmine, all have sweet scents
- Cosmos- cosmos bipinnatus

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Moonlight Gardens
(Continued from page 13)

- Nicotiana [flowering tobacco] nicotiana alata grandiflora, especially fragrant at night
- Petunia-petunia hybrida multiflora- the fragrance is increased at night
- Potted Angle's trumpet [Datura metal]
- Moonflower vine [ipomoea alba] blossoms open in the evening, attracts hummingbirds and sphinx moths
- Japanese iris [iris kaempferi] the white variety looks like large butterflies in the dark
- Sweet alyssum [lobularia maritima] increase fragrance at night
- Evening primrose [oenothera biennis] fragrant flowers open in the evening
- Roses- white cultivars show up well in the dark, choose the antique varieties with fragrance
- Night phlox [zalluzianskya capensis] wonderful night fragrance
- Daffodil, Narcissus, try N. poeticus
- Tuberrose [polianthes tuberosa] might not be winter hardy in our climate/treat it as an annual if you include it
- Anemone, Japanese [anemone hupehensis japonica] light shade lovers
- Aster [aster'snowball'] dwarf variety
- Baby's breath [gypsophila paniculata]
- Candytuft [ibiris sempervivens] 'Autumn snow', sandy soil makes it happy
- Chrysanthemum [any white variety]
- Columbine, Japanese Fan [Aquilegia flabellata 'Nana Alba'] our zone may find this a challenge
- Include some ferns
- Hosta
- Artemisia
- Lamb's Ear

A cool dark background of an evergreen hedge might be a good choice to define your garden. Be careful to prune it low so the moon can find your garden spot.

The list for white flowering plants can be far-reaching, but fragrance is the important factor for choosing these plants for your moon garden. The perfect addition to your moon garden will be provided by Mother Nature when she sends the fireflies.

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Theme Gardens, Barbara Damrosch, Workman Publishing Co, Inc. 1982

"I have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night."
- Sarah Williams

It’s a Wrap – Plant Sale
By Diane Sharp

Thank you, everyone, for another successful plant sale. Not only did we meet a lot of people-both customers and members - sell a lot of plants, educate many in our classes and with information passed on to customers, and have a good time, but we made a lot of money to help support our programs in Collin County. Our net income was $7356.98 which has been divided equally with the Collin County Horticulture Program. The money will be used to support horticulture programs throughout the county. Don’t sit back and relax for long because it will soon be time to start working on next year’s sale.

About the Author: Mary Nell Jackson, class of 1997, is a herb lover and discovered her love for writing about the garden a few years ago when she penned an article about gardening in her p.j.’s.
Garden Checklist for July/August

By: Dr. William C. Welch, Professor & Landscape Horticulturist, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. The following information was compiled from the 2007 updates available at http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/newsletters/hortupdate/.

- Evaluate the volume of water delivered from lawn sprinklers to ensure healthy, stress-free grass during the heat of the summer. One thorough watering which will deliver one inch of water at a time is better than several more shallow sessions. The amount of water available through flower bed sprinklers may be checked by placing several shallow pans among shrubs or flowers.

- Caladiums require plenty of water at this time of year if they are to remain lush and active until fall. Fertilize with 21-0-0 at the rate of one-third to one-half pound per 100 square feet of bed area, and water thoroughly.

- Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off on major pruning from now until midwinter. Severe pruning at this time will only stimulate tender new growth prior to frost.

- Sow seeds of snapdragons, dianthus, pansies, calendulas, and other cool-season flowers in flats, or in well-prepared areas of the garden, for planting outside during mid-to-late fall.

- Plant bluebonnet and other spring wildflowers. They must germinate in late summer or early fall, develop good root systems, and be ready to grow in spring when the weather warms. Plant seed in well-prepared soil, one-half inch deep, and water thoroughly. Picking flowers frequently encourages most annuals and perennials to flower even more abundantly.

- It is time to divide spring-flowering perennials, such as iris, Shasta daisy, oxeye, gaillardia, cannas, day lilies, violets, liriope, and ajuga.

- Make your selections and place orders for spring-flowering bulbs now so that they will arrive in time for planting in October and November.

- Don't allow plants with green fruit or berries to suffer from lack of moisture.

- A late-summer pruning of rosebushes can be beneficial. Prune out dead canes and any weak, bushy growth. Cut back tall, vigorous bushes to about 30 inches. After pruning, apply fertilizer, and water thoroughly. If a preventive disease-control program has been maintained, your rose bushes should be ready to provide an excellent crop of flowers this fall.

- It is not too late to set out another planting of many warm-season annuals, such as marigolds, zinnias, and periwinkles. They will require extra attention for the first few weeks, but should provide you with color during late September, October, and November.

- Establish a new compost pile to accommodate the fall leaf accumulation.
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