

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 5, 6 P.M.
@ SOUTH LOUISIANA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
LAFAYETTE

LPMGA BOARD
MEETING
1 PM MONDAY,
MARCH 17
IRA NELSON
HORTICULTURE CENTER

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Gerald's Corner—Freeze recovery—Citrus, Palms & Sego Plants
- MG Events, Reports, & Announcements
- What Plant Am I?
- Seven Years of Service Hrs
- Southern Garden Fest
- Texas Hill Country Trip
- Festival des Fleurs
- 2014 MG Conference—Southern Region in BR
- Pine Straw rescheduled
- Master Gardener Website
- Between the Rows
- March Calendar

2014 BOARD: President
Babette Werner 2010
Vice President
Heather Warner-Finley
2012 **Recording Secretary**
Jay Ruffin, Jr 2012
Corresponding Secretary
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Agent/Adviser
Gerald Roberts
Volunteer Coordinator
Mary Ann Armbruster
Newsletter Editor
Theresa Rohloff

Awaiting Spring!



Photo courtesy of Mike VanEtten

It's time to order your
4-H strawberries! See Page 5



Join us, again, at South Louisiana Community College Center on Wednesday, March 5 at 6 p.m. Our speaker will be Tina Jumonville, a Master Gardener and former biology teacher. Her talk is entitled "Plant Genetics—The Science Behind Heirlooms, Hybrids, Cultivars, and More."

The board meeting takes place at the IRA Nelson Horticulture Center library on St. Patrick's Day, Monday, March 17 at 1 p.m. With ULL classes in session, members should enter through the doors located near the restrooms.

Everyone is invited to attend the LPMGA General Meeting in the auditorium of the lovely South Louisiana Community College (SLCC) campus at 320 Devalcourt, in Lafayette. The meeting is open to the public, so you are welcome to invite your friends.



At the meeting, Becky Taylor—Propagation, Louann Long—Plant Swap, and Karen Willingham—Website, are slated to give expanded committee reports

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Babette Werner
members young and old. This is evident through our Lafayette Parish Volunteer Hour Service Report by activity. The LSU AgC enter developed the online

March is finally here. We all look forward to better weather, blooming plants and participation in our favorite outdoor activities. Collectively, we are a dynamic volunteer organization. We provide horticulture education through lectures, demonstrations, research and hands on activities with community

system of reporting hours beginning January 2007. I have compiled and published in this newsletter our volunteer hours from 2007 through 2013. Total hours recorded each year and the number of members who recorded hours can be found at the top of the list. I have also included comments which reflect inconsistencies in our reporting or changes in the LSU activity list. See it on page 4. Please check with your committee chair to see where your volunteer hours should be recorded. We are a positive influence in our community. We have much to be proud of as individuals and as an organization. Thank you for your enthusiasm and dedication. Happy Gardening!

Babette

GERALD'S CORNER

Hello Master Gardeners,

As we progressively move into Spring, many of us who love gardening realize that we have experienced an atypical winter—one like we've not experienced in several years. Along with numerous episodes of freezing temperatures came the challenge of trying to protect our landscape's tropical or subtropical plants. Now that it appears that the winter of 2014 is almost behind us, we are faced with the challenge of assessing freeze damage to many of our cold-tender plants. While there are numerous issues that determine the extent of damage, we know that duration, or length of time that cold-tender plants are exposed to freezing temperatures, factors into the outcome. At one point, I can recall a local meteorologist commented that the Acadiana area had experienced around 60 hours of freezing temperatures. Anytime cold-tender plants are exposed to many hours of freezing temperatures, especially with the temperature in Lafayette dropping to 19 degrees, damage can be expected. Now comes the question of how to deal with plants that were damaged. Based on the phone calls I received within last two weeks and visits with employees at several retail garden centers, there are many people who have questions about assessing damage and what to do.

While there are a host of plants in our landscapes that will need attention following damage due to freezing temperatures, two of the most popular are citrus trees and palms. Both of these plants are susceptible to being damaged or killed by the temperatures we experienced. One of the points I'm making with gardeners regarding citrus is that kumquats and satsuma's are the most cold hardy. Following these, in order of hardiness, are sweet oranges, with grapefruits, lemons and limes being the least cold hardy. Personal observations indicate, to me, we will lose some of these—especially younger trees that were not in a protected areas. The extent of damage is determined by several factors in addition to length of freezing temperatures: location of the plant, age, maturity and overall health of the plants. According to LSU AgCenter recommendations, it is best to wait until Spring is in "full swing" before assessing the damage to citrus. By the time we get into mid-to-late April and May, plants should show signs of new growth. We will be able to assess the damage, begin pruning off dead or brown branches and pulling out or cutting down those plants that show no signs of life. Another recommendation is to scrape the bark of branches or trunk and look for green or brown beneath the bark. Green is usually an indication of life. YET, if you want to be absolutely sure, you can wait until mid-May or a little later. One of the realities is that in South Louisiana, the limiting factor for citrus production is freezing temperatures.

In recent years, we've seen palms planted more frequently. There are many gardeners who are beginning to question whether or not it is wise to plant palms in our area at all. Of all the palms planted here, the queen palm has proven to be very popular. Unfortunately, it is also the least cold hardy of the palms we plant.

While all the palms suffered some damage, the vulnerable queen palms likely sustained the most damage and we should expect that some were killed. Others were damaged too and as a result will not grow out uniformly, with some of the new growth being distorted. Some palms will not recover. Palms are classified as angiosperms in the subclass monocotyledons and are more like bamboo and grasses than like other familiar trees in our landscapes. Stems or trunks of palms tend to be cylindrical in shape and usually have no leaf bearing lateral branches. There is usually one main growing point on palms known as the terminal bud located at the very top of the crown; this is where all leaves and growth arises. Once the growing point is damaged or killed—a possibility outcome with this winter's freezing temperatures—that palm usually will not recover. Once again once that growing point is killed, the palm cannot generate a new one. That is why a palm should never be cut back from the top to try and control its height because it will die.

There are people who talked about protecting their palms by wrapping the trunks with insulating material or small Christmas tree lights; but, if nothing was done to protect the terminal bud/growing point, wrapping the trunk did little good. Since most palms are grown from seed, usually when it reaches a salable size, the grower has so much invested in the palm that it is expensive to purchase. We usually buy the larger palms; however, the larger they are the more costly they will be. So the question becomes how will we know how much damage was done or if the palm survived. For the time being, one can remove the brown fronds, but since palms don't really begin growing until the soil temperature warms up significantly, it is recommended that a true assessment should be put off until mid-to-late summer. By that time, mother nature will show us not only the extent of damage, but whether or not a particular palm survived. As in the case of citrus, those palms that did survive will go through a process of recovery, so that means giving those plant all of the care and maintenance require to assist its recovery. Make sure they're well watered, fertilized, and kept relatively pest free. A true assessment will have to wait until June, July or even August. Sometimes freezes will kill all the fronds, but don't immediately assume that the palm is dead. It is always possible that the terminal bud/growing point survived. So before making a decision to remove it, wait! Give it some time, and look for new growth to occur at the center of the crown. Be aware that there have been cases where palms will begin to show new growth, then die.

Finally, when making the decision as to whether or not to plant palms, always consider the fact the even though there may have been several years of mild winters, the fact remains that it's not a matter of "if," but "when!" Eventually, we will, again, have temperatures similar to the ones we experienced in the winter of 2014!!!!

The sago palm is a popular plant that suffered damage and may have been lost this winter. Belonging to a group of plants called cycads, these are tropical or subtropical species that resemble palms in appearance, but that is where the similarities end. Sago palms are more closely related to pine trees. They are gymnosperms, producing seed bearing cones. Care of Sago, however, is similar to palms. For Sago palms that suffered damage, remove the brown leaves, take care of it and see if it recovers.

Happy Gardening!!!

Gerald P. Roberts

Horticulturist/Master Gardener Program Coordinator

LSU AgCenter

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EVENTS, REPORTS, AND BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

ENJOY YOUR WINTER GARDENING.

IN WINTER NATURE'S LIFE IS GATHERED INTO HER HEART.

2014 LPMGA Meetings:
(First Wednesday
Except in January & July)
Daytime—noon/Evening—6 pm

2014 LPMGA Board
Meetings, 1 pm:
(Third Monday except for
January, July & December)

MARCH 5—South Louisiana Community College * 6 PM	March 17 Ira Nelson Horticulture Center * 1 pm
APRIL 2	APRIL 21
MAY 7	MAY 19
JUNE 4	JUNE 16
JULY—NO MEETING	JULY—NO MEETING
AUGUST 6	AUGUST 18
SEPTEMBER 3	SEPTEMBER 15
OCTOBER 1	OCTOBER 20
NOVEMBER 5	NOVEMBER 17
DECEMBER 3	DECEMBER 8

March's "2nd Saturday Garden Talk"

NEW LOCATION!

Green T Lindon Elementary School Cafeteria

And Memorial Garden

603 Avenue B, Youngsville

March 8 at 10 a.m.

"Pruning Tips for the Home Gardener"

If you are in need of pruning advice after this very tough winter, then you will NOT want to miss this class. Everything from shearing, deadheading, proper equipment, proper timing and even when not to prune will be covered. Tommy Hayes, a State licensed arborist and horticulturist will be answering questions.

Garden Talk for this month at the Demo Beds should be about soil.

In The Garden

Our monthly TV Show broadcasted through AOC Community Media, is targeted to run LIVE, every first Thursday at noon, with reruns each week throughout the month on LUS Channel 3/Cox Channel 15. The show is streamed through AOC One.

Look for the live show on March 6th at noon. March's **In The Garden** will feature Karen Willingham presenting gourds, Margaret Brinkhaus, one of the founders of the Louisiana Gourd Society, may be joining her. Together they will discuss types of gourds, how to grow them and process of preparing them for crafting. The Louisiana Gourd Society show takes place April 3-5 in New Iberia.

Master Gardeners who help produce the show include Nancy Rowe, Anne Breaux, Genee Foley, Marie Jones, Vivian Katz, Lois Manuel and Gary Trahan.

What Plant Am I?

My home is in the Gila Desert of Arizona, southeastern California, and the Sonora Desert of Mexico. I'm the only species in my genus, and in 1933 a National Monument was named for me near Tucson. I'm so slow growing that two years after my seed is sown, I will have reached a height of only 3¼ inches. It takes me 30 years to reach three feet, but I can live for 200 years and reach 60 feet tall. At about seven feet, my main stem, which is held upright by a concealed cylinder of woody poles, begins to put out branches. These branches then put out smaller branches, all of which closely parallel my main stem and help me balance against wind and earth movement. Nesting woodpeckers and flickers make large holes in me. At 16 feet, I can weigh approximately 1,500 pounds because of the water I contain.

My flowers appear on the upper part of my stem and branches when I'm an adult. They are white and about 4¾ inches in both width and length, with a green scaly tube, and short, spreading petals.

My fruit is red inside and out, edible, and opens spontaneously to release my seeds. It was a staple item of diet for the Papago Indians, who also fermented the juice and used it to celebrate their New Year in June.

Do you know what plant I am?

See page 8 for the answer.

LPMGA Service Hours by Activity

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total Hours	6625.5	9260.23	8615.26	7135.55	8353.85	10595.55	12421.75
# member who logged in hours	73	101	96	96	116	137	145
Average hours/member	91	92	90	74	72	77	86
Activity							
Blank - no activity listed	29.5	22.5	299	173.9	443.65	413	245.5
4-H and JMG Program	38	66	64	146.75	47	40	20.5
Advanced LMG Program		3.5			62	10.5	6
Answer Email	2	41	176	105	17.5	8	1
Answer Telephone Calls	305	475.83	677.5	782.55	531	75	5.25
Civic and Community Event	61	98.5	472	113	204.25	344.25	467.25
Civic and Community Landscaping	94	98.5	52.05	80	446.75	299	116.25
Community Vegetable Gardens	99		100.5	71.5	14	25	18
Continuing Education	2	27.5	3.75	39	6	7.5	50
Demonstration Gardens and Field Day	1812.5	3193.1	1680.56	1131	861.7	1221.45	1771.3
Farmers Market							179
Garden Show	70	263	152.3	116.8	12	53.5	78
Garden Tour	127.5	50.5	60.5	64	92	40.5	106.25
Greenhouse				93	371	2021.65	1936.45
Speaker's Bureau	78	281	173.5	134.5	160.5	164.25	221.95
Habitat for Humanity	20	12	54	76	59	76	31
Home Visit	9	89.55	53.75	66.5	25	46.55	49.75
Horticulture Therapy	39.5	7		16	24		
LMG Class, Instruction & Organization	113	293.5	193	212	269.25	337.5	248.45
LMG Newsletter	435.5	433	359	331	194.5	181.5	295.3
LMG Office Client Consultation		7	4	1.5			
LMG Parish Program	699	865.3	699.95	948	953.25	967.8	1130.1
Mass Media	126	160.45	210.5	128.45	285.25	246.5	120.75
Phone Bank (calling those w/out email)		22.5			3	8	
Plant Health Care Clinic		15	4	7.5		3	
Plant Sale	1066	2016.5	3066.9	2221.1	2613.25	3313.7	4339.2
Plant a Row and Food Bank				5	2.5		
School Gardens K-12	3	48.5	5.5	48	602.5	621.4	836
School Programs K-12	144	42	53	22.5	35	9	16
State LMG Conference	1202	609				39.5	41
Website Maintenance	50	18		1	18	21.5	91.5

FOOTNOTES: Membership:

The chart reflects trends only. Inconsistency in recording hours for an activity in the same category in one year or in multiple years makes it difficult to interpret data.

There are five meritorious members and 14 sustaining members, a total of 19 members who do not have to record hours. We strongly suggest that they continue to record to assist the LSU AgCenter volunteer hour reports.

As of January 1, 2013 we had 164 active members and 67 inactive members. The number of active members will fluctuate as members submit dues throughout the year.

Active membership includes 29 Associate members (Class of 2013) who have to earn 40 hours by the end of 2014.

Committees:

Blank field - no activity listed represents members who recorded hours and bypassed the dropdown activity field.

Answer Telephone Calls – requirement to work at LSU AgCenter office was dropped so the number of hours in this category reflects new policy

Civic and Community Landscaping – Vermilionville Medicinal Garden started in 2011 and logged in under this category. In 2012, the project was made a demonstration garden and hours were then recorded in Demonstration Garden and Field Day category.

Propagation hours were at one time logged in under Plant Sales. In 2012 a Greenhouse category was added and hours were recorded under this category. PlantFest was started in 2012. Hours in the Plant Sale category increased offsetting the move of Propagation hours to the Greenhouse category.

School Gardens kicked off in 2011. Hours reflect growth of program.



A partnership between UL Lafayette Ira Nelson Horticulture Center
and the Lafayette Parish Master Gardener Association

Save the Date

Saturday & Sunday

April 12 - 13, 2014

Blackham Coliseum

Lafayette, Louisiana

Contact Colette Anzalone for more information
337-288-0283 or colettea@bellsouth.net

HELP NEEDED!

Cindy Wiley is seeking MG volunteers to work the check-out at Festival des Fleurs. She needs people to fill out tally sheets and people to work as cashiers. Please email her at cindywiley47@gmail.com.

LPMGA PLANT SWAP SATURDAY, APRIL 19TH

It's not too early to start those cuttings for the Spring Plant Swap.

The Saturday, April 19th Garden Talk will feature the Plant Swap at 10 a.m. in the Demo Beds. Bring one rooted, identified plant for the formal swap, some to trade before and after the swap, and any "extras" you have (especially foundation plants) for Habitat For Humanity.

April 19 is the Saturday after Festival Des Fleurs, so our dedicated MG volunteers will be able to participate and join in the fun.

Contact Louann Long at louannmc@aol.com if you need more information, have questions, or would like to volunteer to help at the Swap.

BUY YOUR FRESH STRAWBERRIES — HELP 4-H



It is time to plan for some fresh Louisiana Strawberries! The Lafayette 4-H Foundation is selling flats of fresh strawberries for a fundraiser.

They are being sold for \$20.00 a flat which equals eight pounds or 12 pints. They will be picked fresh from the grower in Independence, Louisiana and delivered the next day. To ensure that you get the best quality berries, the grower will determine the exact delivery date and you will be contacted by the 4-H Office with the exact pick up date.

Pick up is scheduled between April 7-11, 2014 from 2 – 5 p.m. at Fresh Pickin's Market located at 907 Kaliste Saloom Road in Lafayette, LA. We are requesting two forms of contact (phone, email or address) when you place your order. Pre-orders are required and checks should be made out to the Lafayette 4-H Foundation. Thanks!



A Benefit for Family Promise of Acadiana, a non-profit coalition helping families without homes to reach and sustain their independence.

The Gardens of Harold and Sarah Schoeffler: 3502 E. Simcoe St., Lafayette, LA (near Oakbourne Country Club)

Master Gardener Spring Project

Volunteer hours on April 5 (times to be announced) for:

Ask a Master Gardener | Speakers Bureau

Researching the Monarch Butterfly to set up an Informational Booth
Talks on Blueberries, Camellias | Any Other Short Gardening Topics
(15-Minute Limit suggested)

Planting in Sarah's Garden (dates to be announced)

Contact Sarah Schoeffler for more information at 337.234.4042 or cell 288.0426

FamilyPromiseAcadiana.org

[Facebook.com/FamilyPromiseAcadiana](https://www.facebook.com/FamilyPromiseAcadiana)

P.O. BOX 2984 LAFAYETTE, LA 70502 337.233.3447 FAMILYPROMISEACADIANA.ORG

**SPRING
FIELDTRIP**

APRIL 22

TEXAS

HILL COUNTRY



**Highlights
will be:**

- BECKER VINEYARDS AND LAVENDER FARM
- WILDSEED FARMS
- ARNOSKY CUT FLOWER FARM
- LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON STATE PARK— WILDFLOWERS & BUFFALO
- FREDERICKSBURG GERMAN VILLAGE

Mark your calendars!
More details will follow.



Festival des Fleurs de Louisiane returns This premier Garden Show will take place at Blackham Coliseum on April 12 and 13. This year, LPMGA has been invited to partner on a trail basis whereby we will share 50 percent of the proceeds. The Propagation Team will conduct a plant sale and all Master Gardeners are encouraged to volunteer. The event began as a small group of individuals interested in a raising funds for the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center.

Sponsorships are needed. Advertising will take place on the LPMGA website and FaceBook Page. Please spread the word throughout your neighboring community, to family and friends about Festival des Fleurs.

In addition to the sales area, there is also a display area for local plant organizations such as The Lafayette Garden Club, the Bonsai Society of Acadiana, and the Acadian Orchid Society. For more information about the show or being a vendor, call Colette Anzalone at 337 288-0283 or e-mail colettea@bellsouth.net.

Inviting All Gardeners!!! 2014 Southern Region Master Gardener Conference



**October 21 - 24, 2014
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Baton Rouge, LA**

**Sponsored by:
East Baton Rouge Master Gardener Association
LSU AgCenter,
Louisiana Master Gardener Program**

**For information and registration, go to....
www.southernregionmgconf2014.com
Early registration ends July 15**

HELP NEEDED! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO CREATE 2014 REGIONAL MG CONFERENCE DISPLAY

LPMGA has been given the honor of creating a tabletop display for the 7-State Regional Master Gardener Conference in Baton Rouge, October 21-24, 2014. The display will represent the contributions of nearly 2,000 Louisiana Master Gardeners and promote the LSU AgCenter.

We would like to start early since information and input will be gathered from LMG organizations in 26 Parishes and promotional materials need to be ordered. This will be an on going project with a tentative completion date of October 1st. If you are interested in joining in, and earning some indoor hours during the coming summer heat, please contact **Louann McClelland Long** at louannmastergardener@gmail.com

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference Invites You

The 2014 Southern Region Master Gardener Conference will be in Baton Rouge October 21-24. Sharing Our Southern Roots is the theme for this year's conference, which will present many opportunities for conference attendees to learn more about how horticulture has contributed to our Southern lifestyle.

East Baton Rouge Master Gardener Association is hosting this conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel at College Drive and I-10.

Several presenters, including one of five keynote speakers, Marcelle Bienvenu, will talk on the impact of locally grown food products on Southern cuisine. The other keynote speakers are Mary Palmer Dargan, who will speak on healing the earth one garden at a time; Norman Winter, who will focus on the color presentation in your garden each season; Joe Lamp'l, who will give the "dirt" on healthy soil; and Douglas Tallamy, who will explain how to bring nature home.

Also on the agenda are 24 breakout sessions in which presenters will give information on a wide range of topics from hummingbirds, butterflies and natural habitats to designing flower beds for older people and with children in mind, to choosing the right plants and your cooking style. Throughout the four days of the conference, the Southern Garden Marketplace will be open for conference participants to see and buy new and established plant products from businesses associated with horticulture.

Tours of the area include guided excursions to Imahara's Botanical Garden and Afton Villa Gardens, Rosedown Plantation and The Myrtles, Houmas House Plantation, Burden Museum and Gardens, Hammond Research Station, a Cajun Night at White Oak Plantation and a tour of Manchac Swamp and lunch at Frenier Landing.

More information about the keynote and breakout speakers and their topics, tours and registration is available at the conference website www.southernregionmgconf2014.com. Conference registration can be accomplished only online at the conference website. We are taking registrations NOW! Early registration ends July 15.

We look forward to seeing you in Baton Rouge in October.



*A nice find by Kristy Thompson on the
Ira Nelson Horticulture website!*

New to the Program?
***Get your Continuing Education
Hours by —***

***Watching "In The Garden" on
LUS or Cox Cable***

*('In the Garden' production volunteers—
volunteer time hours only)*

***Attending General Meetings w/
an education component***

***Attending 2nd Saturday Classes
and Garden Talk Classes (every
3rd Saturday) at the Ira Nelson
Demo Beds.***

This icy mix of rain and snow, changed the plans for picking up pine straw bales on February 26.



Bales will now be ready for pick up WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5!

**PLEASE PICK UP YOUR ORDER IN A TIMELY FASHION (DON'T BE LATE). They
will be loaded from 8 AM until 2 PM, in the field behind MG Demo beds.**

Make arrangements and bring your check or correct change.

**ALL orders will be filled ! We have 400 bales coming. You know how many
you requested. Multiply your number of bales by \$7 bale and pay that
amount. If you have any questions call Yvette Nevitt or Mary Ann Nix.**

Visit Our Website!

www.LafayetteMasterGardener.org

Attention: All LPMGA Committee Chairmen

We would like to include any information that you can provide regarding the accomplishments, recognitions, and awards of your committee, as a whole, and/or of individual committee members.

Only information that you provide to me will be included on our website. Please take time to send me any pertinent information/pictures, including years in the past. Also, feel free to e-mail me anything of this nature that you would like added to the website.

Jay Ruffin— lpmgacalendar@gmail.com

BETWEEN THE ROWS

VEGETABLE GARDENING WITH
MARY ANN ARMBRUSTER



Oh, this weather! Will winter never end? I really had thought that the bad cold would have been over by now, but no such luck. It looks like we'll have one more dip into the mid 30's this week. After that dip, the extended forecast indicates repeated dips into the 40's through March 21, but the real cold should be over because the last

average frost date for the Lafayette area is around mid-March as you can see by the map:

It has been difficult watching my poor plants covered in ice, drooping and browned by the cold. I was afraid that two citrus that I had planted within the year were lost, but I checked them last week, and I believe (hope) that they may have survived. They probably have lost a few limbs, but the trees will probably be OK. I am not doing any pruning now, even if I would love to make the ugly brown leaves and branches go away. Those ugly browns actually protect the remaining parts of the plant from the cold. So follow the AgCenter recommendations and wait until the plant puts out new green before pruning off winter-killed branches. You will be protecting your plant and, most likely, losing less of the plant than if you trimmed it up right away.

The cole crops are doing very well with the cold. They love it. My broccoli in particular is producing beautifully. I am picking, and eating, and freezing it regularly. I will have broccoli throughout the summer. I did not plant cabbage or cauliflower, but if I had, I would expect an equally good crop from them.

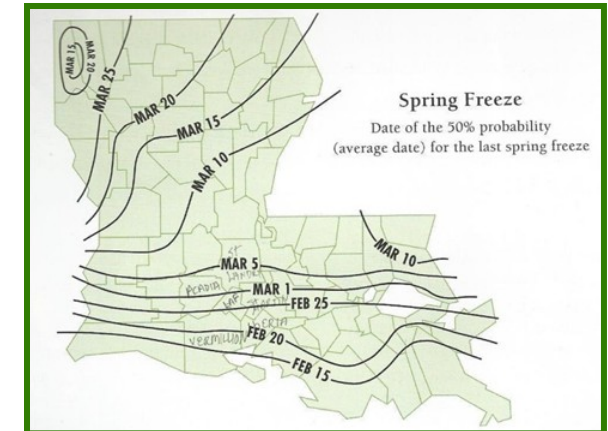
After this last spattering of cold nights, you will be able to plant some of the warm weather crops, like beans, but, please do yourself and your plants a favor and wait until the soil has warmed to about 60° before planting tomatoes, eggplants, and peppers; that should happen about mid-March. The air temperature may be quite warm, but the soil temperature may still be well below 60°. Yes, you can try to get a jump on the season by planting one or two seedlings early, but if we get any serious cold, the plants could languish and never really develop well. Waiting will insure sturdy, well-developed plants. Yes, I always try for an early tomato or pepper, but never with all of my seedlings. Sometimes it gets me that extra-early tomato, but about half the time, I lose. Risking a few is a reasonable gamble though.

Speaking of seedlings, most of mine are coming up well. I planted fourteen varieties of tomato, ranging from the reliable, I WILL get a crop, Ace, to the heirlooms and foreign seeds, like Mortgage Lifter and Japanese Trifele Black (actually from Russia), to the more modern creations, like the open-pollinated Chocolate Cherry. With this range, I should have tomatoes all season long. I follow the same idea with peppers, cucumbers and eggplant. I use a few seeds of each type to have one or two plants of many different varieties. This gives me early, mid-season and late varieties, as well as insurance in case one variety does not do well that season.

You can put out summer squash, cantaloupe, okra, limas, cukes and corn starting in early March. Beginning the middle of March you can set out watermelon, pumpkin and collards, as well as tomatoes, peppers and eggplant, but remember that the soil temperature has to be at least 60°. If you stagger setting the plants out, putting a few plants out each week or 10 days, you can lengthen the harvest. My peas are doing well. Last week I went to look at them and found that the Oregon Sugar Pod II was up nicely, but the Cascadia had not sprouted at all. Since I didn't have any more Cascadia seed, I overplanted the area with Mammoth Melting Sugar. I checked them today and all are up and doing well.

This cold, warm, cold, warm weather that we have been having has the fruit trees a little confused. My apples and peaches are both blooming. If we have a good cold snap, I could lose all of the production this year. I don't believe that the predicted cold will be low enough to be problematic though – or maybe I should say, 'so I hope'.

For anyone who is interested, the Acadiana Permaculture Guild meeting this quarter will be held at my home on Saturday, March 1st at 1:00 pm. Details can be found on the Guild's FaceBook page. We will be designing a fruit tree guild and pruning fruit trees. I hope you all have luck with handling the cold this month, and next month we will have SPRING and we can go back to enjoying our gardens before the summer heat keeps us in again.



Until next month,
Happy Gardening!

WHAT PLANT AM I?

ANSWER:

Carnegiea gigantea:

Saguaro



The
edible
fruit of
the
Saguaro.



**I can
live in
a desert!**

innovate . educate . improve lives
for the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our Web site at www.lsuagcenter.com



LSU AGRICULTURAL CENTER
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1010 Lafayette Street, Suite 325
Lafayette, LA 70501-6884

LPMGA Calendar March 2014

March 1st & 2nd: Garden Relocation: Carencro Middle to Acadiana High (See page)
March 4th: Mardi Gras
March 5th: Ash Wednesday
March 5th: Re-Scheduled Pine Straw Pick Up—See page 8
March 5th: General Meeting—S. LA. Community College, 320 Devalcourt, 6 pm
March 9th: Daylight Saving Time begins
March 17th: LPMGA Board Meeting
March 17th: St. Patrick's Day
March 20th: First Day of Spring
March 22nd: LSHR Plant Release and Luncheon



Gardener's Gazette is issued to all members of the Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners' Program. All members are encouraged to submit news, educational features, and photographs. The deadline for all submissions is the 24th of each month for publication in the next month's issue unless otherwise noted.

Please send newsletter items to:

Theresa Rohloff thescottherald@aol.com Please include:

"MG NEWSLETTER" in your subject bar.

The Master Gardener program is a division of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Agency and can be contacted at:

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If you have a disability which requires special assistance for your participation in our meetings, please call 337-291-7090

Please note: All meeting and event dates, times, and locations are subject to change.

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