

EXCELSIOR SPRIGS

GARDENERS OF AMERICA, INC.

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS CHAPTER

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Newsletter for the Month of February, 2003 - volume 8 number 2

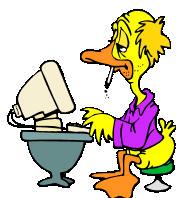
How about this - a newsletter in COLOR!

Terrie had this wonderful idea that perhaps in the middle of a cold and dreary winter a bright, colorful newsletter might perk up our readers.

Therefore after many high-level conferences, meetings held behind closed doors, clearance from the Pentagon and CIA, numerous Emails, and approval from ES-GOA Prez we proceeded to produce our first ever color newsletter.

This will not be our usual fact-filled, perfectly edited newsletter. Since doing the color thing had to cut back somewhere to save on ink, paper cost, and postage.

We hope that each of you truly enjoy this endeavor, as it most likely will be a one-shot deal. For we do not wish to spoil our readers or do so much work on a regular basis.



FEBRUARY MEETING

Our next meeting will be on Monday, February 10th at 7:00 PM in the lower level meeting room of Excelsior Springs Community Center.

This will be Valentine's Day week so come with a loving heart and spend an evening with gardening friends.

The speaker will be Connie J. Knott telling us about her Nature Sanctuary located just outside of Excelsior Springs.

Refreshments will be provided by: Terrie Williams – Food, and Barbara & John Rossbach – Drink.

Please come early and bring a friend!!!

LOOKING BACK

All of following from Elsie Tackett:



March, 1998

Hall of Waters Easter decorations. There were many different styles and displays; however I think what we did looked the best of all. Members brought in many of their wonderful house plants.



May, 1999

At Sylvia Boston's place. Boy Scouts were there to learn to plant flowers in containers, which they then gave to their mothers for Mothers Day.

"I'm sorry," said the clerk in flower shop, "We don't have potted geraniums. Could you use African violets instead?" Replied the customer sadly, "No, it was geraniums my wife told me to water while she was gone."

BECOMING A MASTER GARDENER

Part 5 - By John Rossbach

I have now completed my final three Master Gardener classes.

The first covered "Vegetable Gardening", presented by Lala Kumar. He has taught horticulture in numerous countries. Places where they have no Price Choppers. Where people literally garden to survive. In three short hours he covered site selection, soil fertilization, tools, intercropping and tips for growing every vegetable from A to W.

Trella Banks came for our next presentation. She's a professional from the private sector. The class was entitled "Xeriscaping/Annuals". Xeriscaping is gardening using efficient water use. This can be done by mulching, using native plants, reducing the size of lawns and good planning in landscape design.

The last class was "Common Wildlife Problems". Wendy Sangster from the Missouri Department of Conversation gave this course. Telephone calls coming in on the gardening Hot Line frequently come from people concerned about wildlife damaging their gardens, property and homes. So we must be prepared to patiently understand and suggest options to the caller.

The next week was Graduation. I am no longer a trainee. I am now a Master Gardener Intern. When I fulfill the required forty-five hours of volunteer service I will have earned the title of Master Gardener.

In the hands of a child, a fistful of dandelions means as much as a dozen roses.

If dandelions were hard to grow, they'd be most welcome in any lawn.



Would you believe I took this picture last week in our backyard???

Actually it was taken just before Christmas in our daughter's backyard at Ft. Pierce, Florida. Besides these banana trees she has an orange and lemon tree. Also three very large coconut trees. Wouldn't it be nice this time of year to walk out your back door to this???

Board of Directors

The monthly Board meeting will be on Saturday, February 22nd, starting at 9:00 AM in Price Chopper eating area. As usual all members are encouraged to attend to provide input or just come to watch and enjoy the company.



Change of Mind

A man sits down at a restaurant and looks at the menu. He tells the waiter, "I think I will have the turtle soup".

The waiter leaves, but the man changes his mind to pea soup. He calls out to the waiter, "Excuse me, can you hold the turtle and make it pea?"



This picture of our current Prez watering his flower beds was taken during last summer's drought.

Website of the Month

From Terrie Williams:

<http://emilycompost.com>

a gardening site by Emily, an enthusiastic amateur gardener of fifty years. Not just about composting but a full informational site.

One who plants a garden, plants happiness Chinese Proverb

MANAGING A GARDEN NURSERY

By Keith Cobb

“Odds and Ends”

Early in January our staff attended educational sessions sponsored by the Western Nursery and Landscape Association in Kansas City. Mary, Kim, and Mary said they thought the sessions were very informative. There is also a huge trade show, at which a person could spend a lot of money. And if you think shopping with your spouse is bad, try shopping with your employees! Yes, there were many exciting products available, and numerous times I heard something like, “Hey, those are neat” or “We need that”. They are neat and we do need themand I resisted all temptation.

Marketing research indicates “in store signage” is one of the most effective things one can do to increase sales, so this winter we are working on banners and signs to place on our greenhouse benches. The research says customers want information, so we are going to give it to them! These signs are called “bench cards”, and they contain variety names, a photograph, and cultural information about the plant. With each new season we see things we need to do better, and signage is a priority for us to do better this year.

Most exciting of all, about the time you are reading this, plants will start arriving. First, geraniums and pansies and we’ll do our first seed sowing for tomatoes and other vegetables. I’m anxious to see some green growing in the greenhouse. Spring is just around the corner.

Americans spend more than \$500 million each year on flower bulbs!



This picture of our 2nd VP, Ways & Means Chairman was taken at last spring’s ES-GOA plant sale to evidence how hard he works.

A WINTER RETREAT THE FRAGRANCE GARDEN

Revive your winter-weary spirits with a visit to The Fragrance Garden in Powell Gardens’ glass-domed conservatory. This world of delightful scents and springtime blooms highlights nine fragrance zones from jasmine to gardenia. There for entire month of February.

TOUGH GARDENING

An excerpt from short story by Peter Guttmacher:

Gardening in the mountains of northwestern Maine has its own peculiarities. Our planting and growing season is tucked in between the final thaw and the first killing frost. You may miss it entirely if you have to go out of state for the weekend or take a long nap.

A garden has this advantage, that it makes it indifferent where you live. A well-laid garden makes the face of the country of no account; let that be low or high, grand or mean, you have made a beautiful abode worthy of man.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

From Terrie Williams:



February At The Sanctuary

Saturday the 15th, 8:00 AM: Birds & Breakfast, relax by our birding area and enjoy a breakfast prepared by the Sanctuary's finest chefs. \$12, reservations required as space limited.

Saturday the 15th: Bluebird Box Building, be ready for the spring arrival of Missouri's state bird. \$14, reservations.

Saturday the 22nd 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM Bird Seed sale, 15% off on black oil sunflower, millet, safflower, sunflower chips and Wild Bird mix.

For reservations/more info, 816-781-8598

February is National Bird Feeding Month



Have you ever watched kids
On a merry-go-round?
Or listened to the rain
Slapping on the ground?
Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight?
Or gazed at the sun into the fading night?
You better slow down.
Don't dance so fast.
Time is short.
The music won't last.

From Terrie Williams:



Coming Soon

It won't be long until Spring, and one of the early Missouri wildflowers is the common blue violet (*Viola papilionacea*). This lovely little flower with the heart shaped leaves comes with a bonus; it blooms profusely all spring, then blooms again in the fall.

It can be an aggressive plant, especially in the shady areas, which makes it a terrific groundcover under trees and shrubs.

Violets flower in a variety of shades from deep blue to rich purple to white streaked with lavender.

Young, tender leaves can be added to salad and proved a rich source of vitamins A and D, and the blossoms are sometimes candied.

Five simple rules to live by:

1. Free your heart from hatred.
2. Free your mind from worries.
3. Live simply.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less.

TOIL IN THE SOIL

Ornamental Grass of the Month



Miscanthus sinensis, 'Goldfeder'

One of the fairly tall *Miscanthus*, about six feet in height. Makes for an outstanding ornamental when planted alone against a dark background.

It is a beautiful gold and green variegated grass with an open vase shape and cascading foliage as the flower culms begin to rise. The flower head is golden yellow as well.

A warm season grass that dies back to ground each winter in Zone 5, but will come back even larger in spring.



EDITOR MUSING

Well, this is the end of our special edition. The work was long but not as hard as I thought it would be when I started.

The fall and winter weather so far has not been kind to plants. Way too dry with temperatures either way above normal or way below normal. I am glad I repeatedly watered our evergreens in November and December.

Purchased an Amaryllis bulb this year for first time. It took several weeks, but currently have beautiful huge dark red blooms to enjoy. Hope it grows on later.

The last couple of weeks we have an American Kestrel falcon hanging around our bird feeders. The other birds scatter when she (I know she is a she cause Mary told me so) comes around. She is a beautiful animal.

My best friend gave me an orange tree that he brought back from Florida as a seedling about five years ago. It is now about two feet tall in a very large planter. Since he wintered it in dark garage it has no leaves now, however I have it in the Sunroom. I hope to have it in full leaves in time for Hall of Waters decoration. Do you have any advice for me???

This time of year not much gardening to do outside, so you do have time to write a short article for our newsletter. Just two or three paragraphs is fine, something personal about your recent gardening experiences.

As always you can contact me at:

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