

# Brazos County Master Gardener Newsletter

Gardening News for the Brazos Valley  
Volume 2, Issue 2

Editor: Donna Murray  
March/April 2008

From the Editor;

The focus of this issue is recycling and we are “talking trash”. There are articles and examples of using things that would be thrown away. Instead of going to the landfill they can have a second life improving or beautifying our gardens. We thought we’d cover some ways it’s happening it in Brazos County. I invite your comments and suggestions.

[brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu)



This graveyard is located at Festival Hill Herb Garden in Round Top, Texas and is a graphic depiction of the length of time required for different materials to decompose.

## In this issue

- ❖ From the Editor *page 1*
- ❖ Treasures in the Trash *page 2*
- ❖ Composting: Nature's “Black Gold” *page 3&4*
- ❖ Herbal Highlights-Oregano *page 5*
- ❖ What is in Your Ice Tea? *page 6*
- ❖ Vermicomposting *page 7&8*
- ❖ Blooms for Butterflies *page 9&10*
- ❖ Gardening With Kiddos-Growing Garbage *page 10*
- ❖ BCMG 2007 Recognitions & Awards *page 11*
- ❖ Gardenline: Your Garden Questions Answered *page 12*
- ❖ In the Spotlight-Recycled Solar Lights *page 12*
- ❖ What's Happening at the D.I.G. *page 13*
- ❖ You Need to Know *page 14*
- ❖ BCMGs Recycle *page 14*
- ❖ Up Coming Events *page 15*
- ❖ Word Search Puzzle *page 16*



## Treasures in the Trash

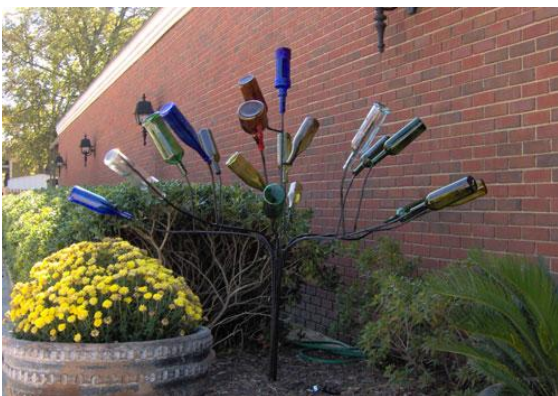
By Suzanne Milstead  
Brazos County Master Gardener

Rummage around your home, resale shop, garage sales, or architectural salvage yards. You might come across a unique item to place in your garden as art! Yes, art. These places are a garden paradise waiting to happen. Once you look beyond what the item was once used for, you might find a different perspective that could adorn a garden nook.

Go to your local garden store and ask if they have any broken terra cotta pots. Many times, these items are tossed, but could be yours free or for a few dollars. Placed on their sides or the broken piece turned away from the front, it could easily add interest and color to the garden.

Four, old shutters from the salvage yard, painted, nailed together make an inviting lantern that you can enjoy the soft glow in the evening. Find a cracked glass ball ceiling light fixture to create a concrete garden sphere. Fill with cement and once hardened, place into a paper sack and break the glass with a hammer. Age the concrete with a green patina by painting with a moss yogurt. (Put moss and plain yogurt into a blender. Use this mixture to paint onto the concrete. Place concrete in the shade for a few weeks, and wa la! You've got aged concrete.) Interesting steel or iron shapes from salvage yards can also be used. Rusted or painted black, they add a bit of whimsy in your yard.

Garage sales or estate sales often yield broken and old garden tools. Look for tarnished cast offs to hang on fences, tool sheds, or walls. Grouped together along with metal bugs and hanging pots, you've created an outdoor garden collage. Colorful china plates from the dollar stores or antique shops become edging. Even one or two, 'planted' in the garden bed add interest. Colorful, empty bottles make interesting edging especially when shining in the sun. Bottle 'trees' grow wonderful sparkling color when light hits them. I've seen them in shades of all blue, or multicolored. Both bring an added delight and conversation piece to your yard.



No matter where you look, you can find a junkman's paradise just waiting to be "planted" in your garden. All that throw-away stuff is garden sculpture. Breathe new life into the trash and create your own outdoor art gallery!

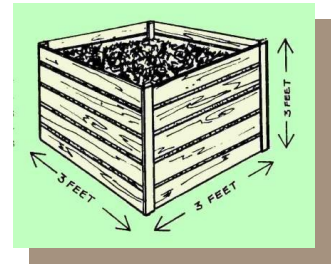
# Compost: Nature's "Black Gold"

By Jennifer Nations  
Brazos County Master Gardener

Most people are aware of the benefits of making and using compost in a garden, but sometimes are not sure how to get started. Perhaps they have heard conflicting opinions about the "right" way and the "wrong" way to compost. While some gardeners are active proponents of the "hot and fast" way of composting, others maintain that "slow and cool is the way to go." The fact is there are many different ways to compost. As long as a few simple guidelines are followed, you can make good, beneficial compost.

## **Size and location**

Start with a 4-foot by 8-foot area, preferably shaded, where water does not collect when it rains. Begin the compost by simply piling up yard waste materials. An enclosure, such as a wire bin or a bin made from wood or leftover pallets may be used as a container. For most efficient breakdown, aim for a pile that is 3 feet high by 3 feet wide by 3 feet deep.



## ***Starting materials***

Cover half the area with a 6-inch high layer of leaves, twigs, or small tree trimmings, and water thoroughly. Whether you choose a bin or a pile, start with some twigs or leaves, about six inches deep. These materials supply carbon. Next, add a couple of inches of grass clippings or fruit/vegetable scraps. These materials add nitrogen. A sprinkling of garden soil may be added at this point, but isn't necessary.

## ***What Not to Put In?***

As a general rule, if it will clog your arteries, leave it OUT of the backyard compost pile. Things like meats, fats, bones, and greasy items take a very long time to decompose, and in the meantime may smell and attract all manner of uninvited "guests." Pet wastes may carry disease and should also stay out of the pile. Avoid weeds pulled from your garden. Unless the pile gets very, very hot, the weeds will sprout, either in your compost pile or later on in the garden.

## ***Mixing It Up***

Mix the carbon and nitrogen materials together with a hay fork, rake, or shovel, and water thoroughly. Top this layer with a 2-inch layer of leaves. Keep repeating the carbon, nitrogen, water, and mix steps until the pile is about three feet high. Cover the top of the pile with leaves, straw, or other carbon-rich material to keep nitrogen (grass clippings, food waste, etc.) from getting smelly and attracting unwanted pests.

### ***Moisture and Air***

Turn the whole pile over with a hayfork or shovel every 2 to 3 weeks, adding water as needed to make the whole pile moist and damp. This is where multiple bins can be helpful. Dumping the compost materials from one bin into another adds air, and at the same time readies the first bin for a brand-new pile. Adding air feeds the aerobic bacteria that are breaking down the yard waste. Without sufficient air, anaerobic bacteria, which work in the absence of oxygen, take over and cause an awful smell.

A pile that is too wet also inhibits airflow. The pile should be just moist enough that you cannot squeeze water out of it. Too dry and the yard waste won't break down; too wet and the pile will smell.

Keeping the pile aerated and moist speeds up the decomposition process. Near the center, the pile should feel warm to the touch and on a cool day, steam may be observed coming off of the pile.

### ***Is it Done?***

With a good mix of carbon, nitrogen, moisture, and air, within about a month the grass clippings, leaves, banana peels and twigs have transformed into rich, crumbly "black gold" compost. If the pile doesn't heat up, or if it seems too dry or too wet, don't worry: "Compost Happens." Remember, Mother Nature doesn't turn the leaves and decaying plant matter on the forest floor, but woodland soil is rich with compost.

### **What To Do With It?**

Once your compost is "done," use this valuable soil amendment all over your garden. It can be used as a top-dressing for lawns, mixed into raised vegetable or flower gardens, or even strained through cheesecloth as a "tea" and used as a tonic for plants.

The great thing about adding compost to your garden is that it will restore the soil's fertility and microbial health. Eventually earthworms, sowbugs, and numerous other micro-organisms will return to the soil, improving plant health. Adding compost improves aeration and drainage in both heavy clay and sandy soils.

Resources: *A Green Guide to Yard Care*; Texas Commission on Environmental Quality GI-28



Spring Fever is upon us. Access the  
*Brazos County Vegetable Planting Guide* and  
*Vegetable Varieties for Brazos County* at the Brazos  
County Master Gardener web site  
<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/brazos/Home.html>



# Herbal Highlight

Sandra Williams  
Brazos County  
Master Gardener

## Oregano

The summer of 2007 brought us weather variety: abundant rain, drought and extreme heat. One plant that was always perky and trouble-free, despite the uncertain climate was oregano, *Origanum vulgare*. Mine had grown into lush, fragrant mounds of greenery about a foot tall. It survived my forgetfulness and spread as far as I let it. In summer it produced pale lilac flowers which attracted many pollinators.

All year it can provide flavoring for tomato sauces, pizza, salads, eggs, meats and fish. I like to dry some oregano each year. Its flavor preserves well, and it's convenient to have on hand in dry form just in case of a hard, hard freeze.

I started my oregano from a small 2" transplant and it has grown vigorously with little care beyond watering and dividing when it exceeded its allotted space. Full sun is desirable, though it also does well in light shade. Plant in well-drained soil and enjoy it for years.

It makes an interesting tea and can be used as a mouthwash. Cosmetically it can be used as a hair rinse. The plant has anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties.



## What is in Your Ice Tea?

**Laura Biddle Brazos County Master Gardener**

Chemicals we use in our yards and gardens can be useful. If however, they are used carelessly and stored or disposed of improperly, they can affect our environment.

A major pollutant of groundwater is nitrates from fertilizers and groundwater is a major source of drinking water. Studies have also shown that elevated nitrate and phosphorous levels result in oxygen deficits in surface water. This causes an increase in algae growth, reduced water clarity, and a decline in aquatic habitat.

### **Combining the best of organic and traditional gardening principles to maximize our gardening enjoyment while protecting our environment is the objective of EarthKind.**



Some recommendations are:

Use fertilizers that gradually feed plants rather than deluging them with excessive nitrogen. Slow-release fertilizers are not only environmentally sensible, but they also enable plants to grow at optimal rates and have the following advantages:

- Make more nitrogen available as a nutrient to the plant.
- Resists leaching or washing through the soil into the water supply.
- Decreases risk of fertilizer burn associated with heavy applications of conventional fertilizers.

Use compost as a natural fertilizer is another recommendation.

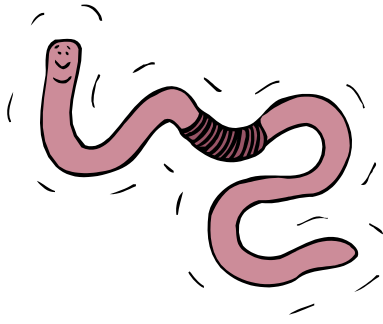
Pesticides can have a ripple effect on the environment. While you may be trying to control a specific insect, you may also be eliminating beneficial ones. Beneficial insects can reduce populations of unwanted pests. The ladybug is a good example of a beneficial insect, since it helps control aphids. Additionally, pesticides when used improperly, can damage plants. Try organic control methods first such as assassin bugs (insects that eliminate other insects), soapy water, or removing pests by hand.

Read and follow the instructions and warning labels on pesticides. It is imperative to store any pesticide or fertilizer away from children or pets. Storage recommendations include:

- Store upright in the original container. Never mix chemicals!
- Store in a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight.
- Identify the contents of the container.
- Put a leaking container inside a large empty container, and use dry cat litter to absorb liquid.

To properly dispose of fertilizers and pesticides in our area, the Brazos Valley Solid Waste Agency (BVSWMA), in conjunction with the cities of Bryan and College Station, sponsor a Household Hazardous Waste Collection (HHW) each year in the fall and spring. This provides area residents an opportunity to dispose of household hazardous wastes free of charge. The next HHW Collection is scheduled for April 26, 2008 from 9am to 4pm, at a location to be announced. Watch for announcements regarding the upcoming date.

EarthKind information may be found at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/index.html>



# Vermicomposting

*By Joyce Sampson*

*Brazos County Master Gardener*

Vermicomposting is the process of using Earthworms, specifically Red Worms (*Eisenia foetida*) to create compost. The earthworms used for this type of composting are not to be confused with regular garden earthworms. Red, Red Wiggler, or Brandling earthworms (all *Eisenia foetida*) prefer compost or a manure environment, regular Earthworms prefer garden soil. The worms consume the waste products and recycle it into castings or worm manure which is very rich in nutrients. The worm compost is often much higher in nutrients than regular garden compost.

Constructing a worm bin is a very simple project. Mine was started the first week of October, 2007 with the help of my Discovery Group which holds classes for international student's wives. They were fascinated with the idea. A large plastic container is an excellent choice for the worm bin. I used a container approximately 25 X 16 X 15 inches or 18 gallons. Drill  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch holes in the bottom for drainage and on all four sides for ventilation. Mine has 8 holes in the bottom and 10 holes on each side. The worms will not crawl out of the holes. You will also need some type of container under the bottom to catch any

liquid that drips. I used the lid that came with my container but you can use black plastic. The bin should be an inch or so above the drip container to prevent the liquid from building up in the bottom of the bin. This liquid can be used to make a very rich compost tea for your plants.

Worms need moist bedding, food, ventilation and darkness. The bin needs to be some place it will not freeze in cold weather. Mine is in the garage beside the hot water heater at present. It may be kept indoors since it does not have an odor.

Shredded black and white newspaper is excellent bedding. Cut the paper into strips no more than one inch wide. The layer of newspaper in the bin should be no more than twelve inches deep, dampened but not wet, the consistency of a damp sponge. The newspaper needs to be fluffed so the worms will have air circulation. Also, put a layer of potting soil (about an inch) in the bottom of the container.

Your bin is now ready for the worms. When you purchase your worms they usually come by the pound and there should be about 1,000 per pound. I did not find a source for the worms locally, so I ordered mine on the internet. Although I ordered 1000 worms, the package I received definitely did not contain 1,000 worms, more like 250. The worms reproduce very quickly and after two and half months I probably have about 1,000 worms.

The scrap food you are going to feed the worms should be cut into small pieces and buried in a small area of the bedding close to the surface. Do not use meat or dairy products. If you are using egg shells, they should be crushed to speed up the process of the worms consuming the food. Small scraps of lettuce, carrot peelings, apples,

orange peel, and potato peels are good choices. You may put your scraps through a blender or food processor if you wish to increase the digesting process. The worms should eat about ½ of their weight in food daily. They do not need to be fed daily, but do keep a record of what and when you feed them. The feeding sites should be moved around the bin so that one area does not have too much in the way of decomposing scraps at one time. Since I did not have 1,000 worms in the beginning, I have experimented with how much food to put in the bin and how often they needed to be fed.

There are two methods for harvesting the compost. The first is to move the compost to one side of the container and put new bedding and food in the empty side and cover it with black plastic. The worms will move into the new bedding and began to get to work. The migration should be complete in a few weeks and the finished compost can then be taken out of the bin. Finish filling in the empty side with new bedding. The second method would be to dump the entire contents of the bin onto plastic sheeting and place it under a bright light. The worms will crawl to the inside of the pile to get away from the light and you can harvest a few

inches at a time until the worms have moved to the bottom of the pile. Refill the bin with fresh bedding and food and place the worms back in the bin.

I harvested some compost in the middle of December using the second method and got about two cups. The compost collected has been used with some potting soil in a pot of Cuban Oregano cuttings that I had propagated earlier in the fall. They have only been in the pot for about two weeks but they are looking really healthy at present. Since I have more worms in the bin now, I will probably harvest the compost more often.

The two articles I used as resources to begin my worm farming adventure were from the University of New Mexico, Cooperative Extension Service and Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Tarrant County. There are several sites on the internet for reference and supplies.

### **HINTS and TIPS**



Place a coffee filter in the bottom of a flower pot. Make sure the holes are covered. If needed use several in one pot. The filter keeps the potting soil in the pot.

Submitted by Autumn Harry  
Brazos County Master Gardener

# Blooms for Butterflies

By Charla Anthony  
Horticulture Program Assistant  
Texas AgriLife Extension  
Brazos County



**Butterflies are a welcome sight for many Texas gardeners as they plan their gardens to make them irresistible to these winged visitors.** With over 400 reported butterfly species in Texas, anyone can have a successful butterfly garden. Creating a butterfly garden can be as simple as planting a windowsill box or as complex as landscaping many acres. It does require some knowledge of local butterfly species, flowers that are attractive to the adults, and host plants for caterpillars.

Give consideration to the location of your butterfly garden, since butterflies visit flowering plants that are in full sun and in sites sheltered from wind. Adults often gather in groups on wet sand or mud, and look like they are eating. This activity is called *puddling*, and they do it to obtain the minerals that are found in the soil. Provide a butterfly puddle by placing a shallow saucer or dish filled with moist sand or gravel and sprinkling salt on it periodically. Some butterflies are also attracted to overripe fruit, such as bananas. Evergreen trees and shrubs, nearby, provide protection at night and on cloudy or rainy days while butterflies rest, hidden in their foliage.

Butterflies begin their life as an egg, laid on the larval food plant. A very tiny caterpillar (larva) emerges and begins feeding on its host plant. They have enormous appetites and do nothing but eat. Caterpillars then must crawl out of their skin or molt, usually around five times, before eventually changing into a chrysalis (pupa). Finally, the once worm-like caterpillar transforms into a beautiful, flying adult.

Butterflies are looking for two things when they enter a garden: *nectar*, the food that adult butterflies need as an energy source for flight and egg production, and *host plants*, the place where the female will lay her eggs and the food that caterpillars need. The butterfly gardener's challenge is to provide a variety of plants. Butterflies are most abundant from spring through fall, so plan your butterfly garden to provide blooming plants throughout the season. Include plants that flower into October and November to attract migrating butterflies such as monarchs, cloudless sulfurs and snout butterflies. Preferred nectar plants include lantana, butterfly bush, pentas, coreopsis, purple coneflower, and liatris. Other favorites are aster, sunflower, plumbago, phlox, snapdragon, gaillardia, verbena, ageratum, cosmos, daylily, petunia, lobelia, sweet alyssum, impatiens and daisy.

Caterpillars, the larval stage of butterflies, feed only on specific plants, often native plants and weeds. For a butterfly to complete its life cycle within a butterfly garden, the caterpillar must be allowed to feed on leaves and other plant parts. Equally important is that no pesticides or other chemicals are used in or near larval food plants. If you must use insecticides, use them sparingly as they are just as deadly to butterflies as they are to other insects. Host plants for caterpillars include common milkweed or butterfly weed for monarchs; parsley, dill and fennel for the parsleyworm caterpillar (black swallowtail); passionflower vines for the gulf fritillary; citrus or

Hercules club for the orange dog caterpillar (giant swallowtail butterfly); native grasses and cannas for the larger canna leafroller, Brazilian skipper; and nettles and thistles for the caterpillars of several brush-footed butterfly species.

Include in your butterfly garden plan a good place to sit and watch the visitors to your butterfly garden. You may decide to keep a journal of the different species that visit and the various plants they prefer. Your journal can lead to discoveries and the planting of new varieties to attract more of these "garden jewels"! Butterfly gardens are a great source for your own enjoyment, photo opportunities, or an outlet for artistic talent.

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/butterflies/index.html>



## Gardening with Kiddos

Donna Murray Brazos County Master Gardener

Let's grow some garbage!.....There are some things that are usually thrown in the garbage or compost bin that can be fun to grow with your kiddos.

**Pineapple**-A new pineapple can be grown by cutting the healthy top from a pineapple you have purchased and enjoyed eating. Cut the top from the pineapple just above where the stem comes out of the pineapple and remove the lower fourth of the leaves. This will expose the stem with small brown bumps, future roots (root primordial). Let it dry for a few days and plant in well drained potting soil. You may apply rooting hormone product, available at most nurseries and garden centers, to the bottom to speed up rooting. Keep it moist but not soggy, in a sunny, warm location. It will take a few weeks to begin growing. Eventually you can harvest a pineapple from your own plant as did our own Master Gardener, Bill Lyles. For more information on growing pineapples go to <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/citrus/pineapple.htm>.

**Avocado**-The seed from you avocado can be rooted in water by sticking 3 tooth picks around the center of the seed to suspend it from the rim of a water glass. The pointed end should face up and the lower half will be in the water. Check the water level often to prevent it from drying out. My grandkids, Aaliyah and Conner, were excited when the seed began to split. We checked often as the roots emerged from the bottom of the seed and then a stem from the top. We planted them in pots with well drained potting soil and each grandkid was responsible for caring for their own avocado tree. The information from <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/fruit/avocado2.html> indicates that you shouldn't expect to harvest fruit, but it will be a nice plant.



## 2007 BRAZOS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER RECOGNITION & AWARDS

*The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer development program offered by Texas AgriLife Extension and is designed to increase the availability of horticultural information and improve the quality of life with horticultural projects.*

For the year 2007:

Sixty one Brazos County Master Gardeners reported 4368 volunteer hours, which is valued at \$59,230.00.

Eight Brazos County Master Gardener Interns were certified. They have completed the Master Gardener 56 hour Training Course, an exit exam, and participated in a minimum of fifty hours of volunteer service through AgriLife Extension Service Brazos County.

Thirty eight Brazos County Master Gardeners were recertified. To be recertified a Brazos County Master Gardener must participate in a minimum of six hours of training and twenty hours of volunteer service through the AgriLife Extension Service Brazos County. A Brazos County Master Gardener must be recertified yearly.

### **BCMGs recognized for 100-199 volunteer hours**

Mike Chandler  
Kathy Glaze  
Redith Kiser  
Bill Lyles

Suzanne Milstead  
Curt Oliver  
Jay Pritchard  
Judy Roebuck

Judy Schafer  
Sandra Williams  
Gary Williamson

### **BCMGs recognized for 200+ volunteer hours**

Lyndon Almand    Cindy Bengs

**Elmer Krehbiel received recognition for 790 volunteer hours.**

### **Brazos County Master Gardener Interns of the Year**

Mike Chandler    Karen Osborne

### **Brazos County Master Gardener Master Gardeners of the Year**

Lyndon Almand    Cindy Bengs    Kathy Glaze

**President's Award Bill Lyles**

### **Gardenline: Your Garden Questions Answered**

Each Wednesday when you call Texas AgriLife Extension, Brazos County at (979)823-0129, a Master Gardener will research your question and give you an answer based on the unique garden challenges we face in our county. Master Gardeners have gone through extensive training on various horticultural topics and are certified to disseminate information supported by Extension and research of Texas A&M University.

It is our mission as Master Gardeners to bring you quality, relevant, and accurate information on your gardening concerns. So, write down the number and keep it handy so when a pesky insect invades or something is not quite right with your garden, you can pick up the phone and give us a call.

**Gardenline: Wednesdays 9-1**

**979-832-0129, email: [brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu)**



## **In the Spotlight**

Recycled Solar Lights  
Brazos County Master  
Gardener, Donna Murray

On the corner of my patio there are two solar lights made from recycled parts. The actual solar lights are the remains of inexpensive plastic fixtures. I didn't throw them away when the plastic body crumbled because I liked the warm yellow glow that was not available in the newer more costly ones I had purchased. The metal stand was hiding behind the potting bench, its original oil lamp long since rusted. A Kerr canning jar filled with beach glass is an encapsulated memory of a weekend with my sister and provides a globe for the larger light. It's also interesting during the day, showing the layers of colored glass going from green and brown, representing the earth, to blue and white for the water and sky. The globe for the smaller light was a patterned glass candle holder that now glows nightly without striking a match.



# What's Happening at the D.I.G. Design Idea Garden

Located at 2619 Highway 21, adjacent to the Texas AgriLife Extension, Brazos County office

Demonstration gardens are places to test, teach and learn. Brazos County Master Gardeners in 2007 began a renovation of their demonstration garden, the Design Idea Garden. Funded by the Brazos County Master Gardener Association, donations and in-kind contributions, the D.I.G. will be a place to see and learn about plants that are best suited for the Brazos Valley, as well as composting, recycling, rainwater harvesting, water conservation and more.

During February, Master Gardeners put the finishing touches on the new 800 square foot covered pavilion, by building benches around the perimeter. Electrical equipment and labor is being donated by Jack and Gloria Matthews, College Station Electric Inc. The completion of this enhancement to the pavilion will allow sound systems for seminars and programs, lighting for evening events, and fans to cool participants in hot weather. Our many thanks to Mr. Matthews and his crew for their generosity.



Attention is now turning to the remainder of the D.I.G. plans. This will occur in stages with the grounds surrounding the pavilion being addressed first. There is some "dirt" work to be done to move construction fill material and get the proper elevation of demonstration planting beds. The design concept plan, developed by Master Gardeners will be followed to determine location, size and plant selection. The first phase includes constructing the main entrance to the garden and pathway that will lead from the parking lot to the pavilion. The main bed along the path to the pavilion will feature Texas Superstars. These plants have undergone extensive testing and have proven to be super performing plants under Texas growing conditions. Approximately 150 feet of pathways has been outlined with water hose and designated with marking paint.

The existing EarthKind rose trial area is bursting with volunteer bluebonnets and will be a double treat when the trial roses and state flower are in bloom.

For information on Texas Superstars and EarthKind roses visit <http://texassuperstar.com> and <http://earthkindroses.tamu.edu>.

## **You need to know What's above and below**

The following links have important and useful information about trees in relationship to power lines.

<http://www.oncor.com/community/vegetation/default.aspx>  
[http://www.oncor.com/pdf/community/plan\\_before.pdf](http://www.oncor.com/pdf/community/plan_before.pdf)  
[http://www.oncor.com/pdf/community/Know\\_Before\\_You\\_Grow.pdf](http://www.oncor.com/pdf/community/Know_Before_You_Grow.pdf)

Likewise, what's underground is just as important. If you plan to do any digging around your property, always call (1-800-DIG-TESS / 1-800-344-8377) to have underground utilities located BEFORE you dig.

### **BCMGs**

#### Things We Recycle in the Garden

##### DECORATIVE

- ❖ Small rocks found when digging are used for mulch on potted plants
- ❖ Bottles of colored glass used on a "bottle Tree"
- ❖ Found logs and large rocks used in garden beds for natural decorations
- ❖ Glass insulators on short stakes as decorations in flower beds
- ❖ Brick foundation pillars as stands for pot plant, sundials, birdbaths, whatever needs a little height
- ❖ Slip potted plants in enamel ware pots and basins

##### Functional

- ❖ Plastic bags to cover cuttings
- ❖ Plastic containers that strawberries com in as starter trays for seeds
- ❖ Pine straw for rose bed mulch
- ❖ Empty 5 gal buckets for carrying garden tools and supplies
- ❖ Empty 5 gal buckets for kids individual gardens at home or at school
- ❖ Mesh bags from onions-put in a bar of soap and tie to an outside faucet for easy outdoor cleanup
- ❖ Coffee grounds-add organic material to soil
- ❖ Aluminum pie tins-tie them to tomato cages or tree limbs to scare away birds
- ❖ Newspaper-prevents weeds from sprouting
- ❖ Tin cans-prevents cutworms around stems of plants
- ❖ Milk jugs-cut slits or poke holes in them and bury around plants to water at the roots
- ❖ Pantyhose-tie or support plants
- ❖ Old CDs tied in fruit trees to scare birds away

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 25, 2008, 7pm**

**Brazos Center**

**3232 Briarcrest Drive**

**Bob French - "Weather Patterns for Living and Growing Plants"**

Weather affects our daily lives, and especially the things we grow. Hear how to best utilize weather forecasts. Come meet Bob French and also hear the musical side of his life. Bob is Chief Meteorologist for News 3 and KBTX Media, a position he has held since 1990. He studied meteorology at Texas A&M and has a B.S. in Mass Communications from Lamar University. He is also an accomplished musician and plays the piano and guitar.

**May 27, 2008, 7pm**

**Brazos Center**

**3232 Briarcrest Drive**

**David Gwin – "Butterflies & Butterfly Gardening in the Brazos Valley:  
Identifying Assets and Growing Infrastructure"**

David Gwen is President of the Rio Brazos Audubon Society and a certified Texas Master Naturalist. He has called Texas home for the past 20 years. Since childhood, he has shared an intense and enthusiastic interest in wildlife and the outdoors in general. David's interactive program will focus on how to make your garden more attractive for the butterflies commonly found in our part of Texas. He will explore the preferred plant materials, appropriate architectural features and the basic elements of design that will help to make your garden more enticing for butterflies.

**August 26, 2008, 7pm**

**Brazos Center**

**3232 Briarcrest Drive**

**Ben Oefinger - "Having Your Own Sanctuary Garden"**

"A sanctuary garden is your own special place. It's a hideaway, a place of peace for man and beast where one kind can find sanctuary for his mind and for his spirit," according to Ben Oefinger who will tell us how to have one in our own back yard. Ben calls himself a retired school guy. He is a Texas Master Gardener in the Johnson County and Tarrant County Master Gardener Associations.

# Don't Trash It!

## Word Search Puzzle

R P E S J B G R R W E N S N B  
 E W L U L A O E E R Y D G E G  
 C C N A T L P T U U N C N W B  
 Y K I H S U E S T U S C I S Q  
 C L E T R T A H O L O E P P E  
 L R E P T E I R S M E M P A V  
 E D O A R A G C P G U S I P I  
 P S L T V E L O P T G L L E T  
 E N H O E E S I S O D E C R A  
 E G W F U T S N E F T S S H E  
 L F F S N I T E I P Z S S B R  
 S O E S O H Y T N A P N A C C  
 C G A R C H I T E C T U R A L  
 Y M I L K J U G P A K M G N E  
 Y Y A R D A R T S P A R C S C

ARCHITECTURAL	NEW
BOTTLES	NEWSPAPER
CANS	OLD
COFFEEGROUNDS	PANTYHOSE
COMPOST	PEELS
CREATIVE	PIETINS
EGGSHELLS	PLASTICPOTS
GATHER	RECYCLE
GRASSCLIPPINGS	REPURPOSE
JUNK	REUSE
LATTICE	SCRAPS
LEAVES	STUMPS
MILKJUG	TREASURE
MULCH	YARDART

Contributed by Cindy Bengs, Brazos County Master Gardener

The "Tin Man" at the Antique Rose Emporium in Independence, Texas is made from cans. He's a great example of having fun with recycling.



### Brazos County Master Gardener Association Officers 2008

Bill Lyles, Ex-Officio  
 Cindy Bengs, President  
 Suzanne Milstead, Vice President  
 Redith Kiser, Recording Secretary  
 Gary Williamson, Corresponding Secretary  
 Debbie Nelson, Treasurer

If you are interested in sharing our  
 newsletter with a friend or  
 subscribing to the e-newsletter, or  
 have comments and suggestions,  
 contact us at  
[brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:brazosmg@ag.tamu.edu)

Brazos County Master Gardeners is a program of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Extension educational programs are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.