



January/February 2005 Volume 4, Issue 1

M. Bloomers

A Garden Journal

"There are two seasonal diversions that can ease the bite of any winter. One is the January thaw. The other is the seed catalogues"...Hal Borland

Angels in our Midst...Debbie McDowell

Lights, music, delectable treats and cuddly puppies and kittens set the stage for our Angels in the Garden Holiday Gala this year. The spectacular fundraising event benefiting the area animal shelters brought glitz, dazzle and festive ambiance to usher in the holidays. The adorable animals dressed up in their holiday attire stole the hearts of our guests and reminded all of us that a loving home can make such a difference for these special companions. Caring shelter personnel provided the lovable orphaned angels and carried them throughout the evening to visit with our guests.

The enchanted evening was enjoyed by approximately 400 people as they listened to heavenly music provided by piano and vocal soloist, Matt Hulon; Jana Milam, harpist; the Hand Bell Choir and the Jubilante Choir, both of Christ United Methodist Church; and the Brenham Chamber Singers of Blinn College. We even had a star celebrity as Texas A&M's very own "Reveille" joined us to kick off the celebration. Extravagant food tables

throughout our courtyard offered a flavorful variety of pastries, hors' d'oeuvres and decadent desserts. And who could not miss the squeals of joy heard among the many guests as our witty Master of Ceremonies, Woody Woodward, announced the winners of our lavish raffle items and door prizes.

The success of our first Angels in the Garden Holiday Gala could not have been achieved without the help of the many companies, sponsors, entertainers and volunteers who came forward to help promote and contribute to this worthy cause. Local communities demonstrated an earnest desire to work hand in hand to ensure that the shelters received the necessary help and funding that they so desperately need to take them through another year. We also would like to thank you, our guests, for bringing the joy and celebration to our first Angels in the Garden Holiday Gala, and we look forward to seeing you again next year!



"Good morning on this winter's day, when birds do sing and boughs do sway"...Michael Angel



Special Thanks...Debbie McDowell

The success of our Angels in the Garden Holiday Gala benefiting the area animal shelters could never have been achieved without the generosity of the many businesses and individuals who donated their time, monetary offerings and gift donations. Our sincere thanks go out to all of those listed below who took part in this worthy endeavor. Please shop these area merchants as a thank you for their contributions to our community.

Sponsors

College Station: All Pet's Medical; Central Texas Sports Medicine- Dr. Rick Seabolt; First Bank of Snook.

Navasota: Mid-South Synergy; Victorian Bed & Breakfast; Bank of Navasota.

Cash Donations

Bill and Diane Welch – College Station.

Rheumatology of Brazos Valley- Dr. Nancy Scheinost; Dorothy Allen; Dr. and Mrs. Cannon – all of Bryan.

Susan Whiteford - Brenham.

Wayne and Joan Mednick - Montgomery.

GW and Sherry Broussard - Kingwood.

Barbara Patterson; Jack Allyn; Charles and Carol Bennett – all of Houston.

Jane Ferguson – Ft. Worth.

Newcomb Service Company- David Newcomb – Hempstead.

Mr. and Mrs. William S. Perry – Henderson.

Gift Donations

College Station: All Pet's Medical; Petco; Coufal-Prater Equipment Company, Benjamin Knox Gallery; SAS Trading Company; Casa Ole; Copy Corner; McAlister's Deli; Girl Scouts of America; Jacque's Toys and Books; Shammy Car Wash; Farm Patch; Sam Samsaman of Harley Davidson; Wiggles and Wags; Brad Brown Agency.

Bryan: Brazos Animal Shelter; Little Red Schoolhouse; Keta's Hallmark; Messina Hof Winery and Resort; Kelley Durham; Party Time Rentals; Kingdom Animal Hospital; Cravey Limousine; Stouhal Tire; Countrywide Home Loans; Nolen's Tuxedo; Christopher's World

Grille.

Snook: Slovacek Sausage Company.

Brenham: Brenham Trophy Company; Monastery of St. Clare; Tom and Ann Brady; Peter Emerson Silversmith; Brenham ISD; Susan Abouhalkah.

Navasota: Navasota Medical Center- Dr. Scamardo, Dr. Prihoda and Dr. Selva; BJ and Pat Gruner; Fountainview Salon-Spa-Fitness; Turner Pierce & Fultz Ace Hardware; Petals 'n Bloomers Florist; Mid-South Synergy; J. Youens; Hard Bonez Barkery; Merial Drug Co.; Voss Rd. Animal Clinic; Ft. Dodge Pharmaceuticals; Stacey Porter; Dewberry Hill Veterinary.

Houston: Treeseach Farms.

El Campo: Greenleaf Nursery.

Jacksonville: Roy Rawlinson Plant Farm.

Entertainment

Matt Hulon – pianist/vocal soloist—Navasota.

Jana Milam – harpist.

Hand Bell Choir and Jubilante' Choir – Both from Christ United Methodist Church-College Station.

Holz Music Company—College Station—keyboard and amp.

Brenham Chamber Singers - Blinn College – Brenham.

Special Appearance

Texas A&M's One and Only "Reveille".

Master of Ceremonies

Woody Woodward – pastor of Brenham Bible Church.

Media Coverage

Cox Media

The Navasota Examiner

The Eagle Grimes County Edition


Graphic Designer

Abigail Johnson of Wired Ranch - Bryan

Valets

Bluebonnet Motors; Thompson County Ford

Other Services & Contributions

The City of Navasota; BFI Waste Management; Wal-Mart; Brookshire Brothers. 

Master Gardener Classes for 2005!

Master Gardener Classes February 2— April 26. 8:30 am until 12:30 pm.

All classes will be on Tuesdays except the first class which is on a Wednesday. Class will be held in the Go Texan Building at the Grimes County Fairgrounds.

Contact Julia Cosgrove at (979) 921-0538.

"...Leaves aswirl with gulls made wild by winter"...George Seferis



Shear Glamour in the Garden...Cardace Wingo

From Fleece To Fashion - An Alpaca Garment Fashion Show and Luncheon...Years ago, alpacas lived only in South America and alpaca garments were worn exclusively by Incan royalty.

Today alpacas live in many countries around the world, and it is a little known fact that the Navasota area has the largest concentration of alpaca ranches anywhere in Texas.

With winter upon us, few other materials, either natural or synthetic, can lay claim to alpaca's light, durable and excellent thermal qualities.

Come experience the warmth and luxury of genuine alpaca. Join us at Café M. Bloomers on Saturday, February 5, for Fleece to Fashion: Alpaca Trunk Show and Luncheon. Presented by the Alpaca Ranches of South Central Texas, you will view both male and female models as they casually stroll from table to table for your viewing of the latest in alpaca fashion.

This event would not be complete without our expert floral designer, Tricia Barksdale of Petals 'n Bloomers presenting her latest floral creations. Many of her beautiful fresh and silk creations will be displayed on the luncheon tables.

Café M. Bloomers will serve a delicious lunch which will include a salad of mixed greens with pecans, rolls, cranberry chicken with wild rice, and chocolate ganache cheese-cake.

As a special touch, there will be several alpacas strolling around the grounds and throughout the gardens. Come and meet these gentle, loveable animals. Listen to them hum, feel their soft fleece, or maybe give one a hug around the neck.

Alpaca garments will be for sale following the luncheon and show; and the Navasota area alpaca ranchers will be available to answer any questions you might have about the animals themselves. Don't miss this event, as it is truly one of a kind.

Make your reservations today!
Saturday, February 5
Two seatings available:
11:00 AM and 1:30 PM
\$25/pp.

Call Café M Bloomers at **(936) 870-3277**
to make your reservations today.
Reservations confirmed by credit card
are required. Seating is limited.



Bluebonnets are Back at Petals 'n Bloomers!

Fresh cut long-stem Bluebonnets Now Available weekly from January to May!
These fresh cut long-stem beauties have a great shelf-life, lasting up to 10 days!

Romance at the Café...Pamela Hays, Staff

Romance your Valentine...Café M. Bloomers will be open for two evenings to allow you to romance your Valentine. We will be serving candlelight dinner on Saturday, February 12 and again on Monday, February 14. Both evenings will offer two seatings—one at 5:30 pm and one at 8:00 pm. These special evenings will offer a menu choice of Cranberry Pork Tenderloin, Mushroom Chicken, or Beef Stroganoff. Each entrée will be served with a spinach pecan salad, wild rice, vegetable medley, homemade bread and of course...a dessert to share with your sweetheart.

Seating reservations must be confirmed with a credit card or prepayment guarantee. The price for this event will be \$25/pp plus tax,

gratuity, and alcoholic beverages. There will be limited reservations so make your plans early.

Call *Café M. Bloomers*
(936) 870-3277
to reserve your table now!

And don't forget flowers for your Valentine...Tulips, Daffodils, Ranunculus, Anemones, Godetia...and you thought Valentines flowers had to be roses?

Order Flowers for Your Valentine Today!
Petals 'n Bloomers Florist
(936) 825-8577.



"From winter we learn silence and acceptance and the stillness thickens"...Gail Barison



From the Hot House... David Albrecht, Horticulturist

Figs, *Ficus carica*, have been present in what is now the United States since at least 1765. Syria is where figs are thought to have originated several hundred years before the birth of Christ, so introduction to North America is relatively recent.

At one time, figs were a staple in almost every Texas home garden, and there was actually a fig industry here in the early 1900's. This industry was virtually based on a single variety of the more than 700 varieties grown world wide. This variety was "magnolia", and was considered a good variety for many years. Over the past 100 years mainly "Celeste", 'Brown Turkey', 'Texas Everbearing', and 'Magnolia' have been the choices of Southern gardeners.

'Celeste' is the most cold-hardy of the group, and is the best choice for the Northern part of the state. 'Celeste' produces one crop per

year around mid-June, and has a closed eye which helps to ensure a high quality crop.

'Brown Turkey' and 'Texas Everbearing' are actually the same, but with two names. This tree produces two crops. The first crop, maturing in May, produces very large fruit on the previous years growth. This is known as a Breba crop. The second crop is produced on the current years growth, and yields a greater number of slightly smaller fruit in late June. The eye of 'Texas Everbearing' is moderately closed yielding high quality fruit.

'Magnolia' was probably the most frequently planted fig in the South over the past 100 years. However, this variety is no longer recommended since the fruit is susceptible to cracking during prolonged periods of wet weather and becoming sour due in part to the very open eye.



Decorating Tips... Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers

China, Chintz & Charm—Antique/Floral Luncheon... If you love antiques, or if you love flowers, you will love seeing them combined at this luncheon.

Fresh and silk floral designs will be arranged in china and crystal. Individual pieces such as creamers, sugar bowls, pitchers, cake plates and soup tureens become even more beautiful when they hold flowers. These floral arrangements will grace tables dressed with vintage scarves and hats.

This luncheon will be a fun way to escape the dreary weather and anticipate a glorious Spring! When you see what can be done with your own collection of china and crystal, you will cherish your pieces even more.

Take a walk down memory lane with us!

China, Chintz & Charm—Antique/Floral Luncheon is Monday, Jan. 24 at Café M. Bloomers. \$25/pp. Two seatings available — 11 am and 1:30 pm. Seating is limited and all reservations must be confirmed with a credit card or prepayment guarantee. Call Café M. Bloomers at **(936) 870-3277** for your luncheon reservation!

Mark your calendar for these upcoming dates:

February 5—Fleece to Fashion: Alpaca Trunk Show and Luncheon and

February 14—Valentine's Day—the Early Bird gets the prettiest flowers! *Send a Smile Any Day!*

Petals n Bloomers Florist

(936) 825-8577



Suggestions to Martha and Bloomer...

Ellen & Michael Albertson, from "Temptations write... Not only will culinary herbs and spices spice up your love life, eating them on a regular basis can also make you healthier by boosting the immune system and decreasing your risk of cardiovascular disease and hypertension.

Sprinkling cinnamon, thyme, tarragon, and cumin on meat killed up to 80 percent of bac-

teria and other microbes, preventing food poisoning, according to researchers from Cornell University. Garlic, onions, allspice, and oregano destroyed almost 100 percent of the microscopic invaders.

That's one reason why, in hot climates where food-borne illness is a potential hazard, people use a tremendous amount of herbs and spices in their food.



"February is merely as long as is needed to pass the time until March"... Dr. J. R. Stockton



Ask Martha & Bloomer....

Dear Martha: Santa brought me a Christmas Cactus. How much water does it need?

Martha here....Any Christmas Cactus that is still blooming after the New Year will appreciate water when the container feels light and the soil is dry about one inch from the top. Water thoroughly and don't water again until the container feels light.

Dear Bloomer: Ooops, I forgot to turn over my compost pile during the Fall. Is it too late?

Bloomer here....If you did not get the compost pile turned over in the Fall you can turn it now.

Honeysuckle... Good vs. Bad... Karen Breneman

The honeysuckles, *Lonicera* species, are easy to grow plants-vines or small shrubs, evergreen to semi-evergreen or deciduous, most with fragrant tubular flowers. The Southern Living Garden book lists 12 species, but not all honeysuckles are desirable landscape plants.

The Japanese honeysuckle *Lonicera japonica* with yellow and white blossoms, common along fence rows in the country and in many home landscapes is not a native plant, but an escaped landscape plant. This exotic, invasive vine native to Japan is reducing diversity of native plants and destroying important habitat. This destruction leads to reduced number of species, both plant and animal, and in extreme cases can lead to extinction of a species. Studies have shown that song birds nesting in the exotic vine have a higher predation rate than similar birds nesting in native honeysuckle. This plant does not belong in Texas and should not be planted or sold.

Coral honeysuckle *L. sempervirens* is a native honeysuckle-a favorite of hummingbirds and butterflies. The clumps of two-inch long red

trumpet flowers appear in early spring during the hummingbird migration with occasional blooms throughout the year. A yellow flowered variant is available. All parts of this evergreen (except in extreme winters) vine are desirable from the nectar filled blooms, grayish green leaves, to the red berries in the fall-a favorite stop for berry eating song birds. There is no fragrance as in the exotic, invasive Japanese honeysuckle.

Coral honeysuckle climbs by twinning, is drought tolerant, prefers part shade, less invasive than the exotic, and is a tidy vine for pergolas or trellises near walkways. Sometimes called a trumpet honeysuckle this vine is not related to the native trumpet vine *Campsis radicans* which is a larger rampant vine with clumps of red, yellow, or orange 3-4 inch long trumpet flowers. *C. radicans* is deciduous, climbs with aerial rootlets which can be damaging and is best in a large landscape with large trees.

Other species, some exotic, make nice landscape plants. Buy only the native species and when you find *L. japonica* inform the nursery of its bad habits.



What's Cooking at the Cafe'... Pam Hays

Cooking Schools are returning...Café M. Bloomers welcomes back Chef Erin McFarlane. Erin will be presenting our daytime and evening cooking schools from January to March. The format for the daytime cooking schools will be a one hour demonstration at 10:30 am followed by a luncheon.

The format for the evening cooking schools will be a two hour demonstration beginning at 6:30 pm with a sampling of each course, including complimentary wine.

All cooking schools have limited seating and reservations must be confirmed with a credit card or prepayment guarantee. Daytime cooking schools are \$25/pp, and evening cooking schools are \$40/pp.

The schedule for first quarter cooking

schools is as follows:

Daytime Cooking Schools

"Easy and Elegant French Desserts" —Friday, January 28.

"New Ideas on Cheesecake" - Friday, February 18.

"Pies, Pies, Pies" - Friday, March 25.

Evening Cooking Schools

"Winter Gathering for Friends" - Tuesday, January 11.

"Valentine's Day: "A" is for Aphrodisiac" - Tuesday, February 8.

"Classic French Dining" - Tuesday, March 8.

Make your reservations early by calling

Café M. Bloomers

(936) 870-3277



Calendar of Events.....

Saturday Seminars—and they are Free!

- "EarthKind Roses" Seminar—Saturday, Jan. 29 - 11 am. Gaye Hammond, Rose Specialist.
- "Antique Roses" Seminar—Saturday, Feb. 12 - 11 am. Clyde Cannon, Texas Master Gardener, Rose Specialist.
- "Fruit & Nut Trees for the Home Gardener" - Saturday, Feb. 19—11 am. Millie Burrell., MS Horticulture, Tx A&M.
- "Visions for Brazos Valley Gardens" Seminar- Saturday, Mar. 19 - 11 am. Dr. Bill Welch.
- "Wildflowers" Seminar—Saturday, April 9 - 11 am. Dennis Marquardt, Tx. DOT.
- "Timeless Treasures & Dazzling Discoveries" Seminar - Saturday, April 23 - 11 am. Heidi Sheesley of Treeseearch Farms.
- "Irrigation Systems in One Hour" Seminar - Saturday, June 4 - 11 am. Gaye Hammond, Rose Specialist.

Cooking Classes—Call Café M. Bloomers at (936) 870-3277 to make your reservations confirmed by credit card.

- "Winter Gathering for Friends" Cooking Class - Tuesday, Jan. 11 - 6:30 pm. Chef Erin McFarlane. \$40/pp.
- "Easy and Elegant French Desserts" Cooking Class - Friday, Jan. 28—10:30 am. Chef Erin McFarlane. \$25/pp.
- "Valentine's Day: "A" is for Aphrodisiac" Cooking Class - Tuesday, Feb 8—6:30 pm. Chef Erin McFarlane. \$40 pp.
- "New Ideas on Cheesecake" Cooking Class - Friday, Feb. 18 - 10:30 am. Chef Erin McFarlane. \$25/pp.
- "Classic French Dining" Cooking Class - Tuesday, Mar. 8 - 6:30 pm. Chef Erin McFarlane. \$40/pp.
- "Pies, Pies, Pies" Cooking Class - Friday, Mar. 25 - 10:30 am. Chef Erin McFarlane. \$25/pp.

Teas, Fashion Shows, Luncheons & Dinners—Call Café M. Bloomers at (936) 870-3277 for your reservations confirmed by credit card.

- "China, Chintz & Charm"—Antique/Floral Luncheon—Monday, Jan. 24 at 11 am AND 1:30 pm. \$25/pp,
- "Fleece to Fashion: Alpaca Trunk Show & Luncheon"—Saturday, Feb. 5—11 am AND 1:30 pm. \$25/pp.
- "Romance your Valentine" Dinner—Saturday, Feb. 12 AND Monday, Feb. 14—5:30 pm AND 8:00 pm. \$25/pp plus tax & gratuity.
- "Valentine's Day" Tea - Sunday, Feb. 13 - 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15 /pp.
- "Luck of the Irish" Tea - Sunday, Mar. 13 - 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15/pp.
- "April Showers" Tea - Sunday, April 10 - 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15/pp.

For more seminar information, visit us at www.MarthasBloomers.com. **Saturday Seminars are Free!**

To Register for Seminars: Call (936) 870-4044 or email: registration@Marthasbloomers.com.

For Cooking Classes, Teas or Luncheon Reservations confirmed by credit card,
please call Café M. Bloomers at (936) 870-3277.

We welcome your suggestions for future seminars. Please email to: suggestions@MarthasBloomers.com



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