



January/February 2007

Volume 6, Issue 1

# *M. Bloomers*

## *A Garden Journal*

*"The best or most beautiful things in the world can not be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart"...Helen Keller*

### *Green Can Chase the Blues of Winter...Gay Houston, Staff*

**After the colorful poinsettias, Christmas cactus, garlands and pine, holly, or fir trees are gone, a home may seem very bare.** While it is a relief in many ways to clean, pack, and throw away the Christmas excess, somehow there is a melancholy feeling. It seems a long, long time until Spring brings beauty to the garden. To help chase those winter blahs it might be time to add a few houseplants to give a fresh look of green. Houseplants or tropicals are such a part of the home that we might overlook the potential of how they can uplift our spirits and not be just another piece of furniture. While we are familiar with such names as dracaena, philodendron, pothos ivy, and ficus, many changes are occurring in these favorites.

Plant breeders have added different colors, shapes, and growth habits to make these old favorites even more appealing. Our greenhouse also has many other plants that do well in the home. Palms, bromeliads, orchids, ferns, and a few more "exotic" indoor plants are fun to browse on a cold winter day.

One of the things we hear most often is "I kill houseplants". Let us show you the many

types that can do well in your home with just a little light, water, and TLC. With basic knowledge about placement, watering, and feeding you can enjoy the fresh beauty year round.

Houseplants with common requirements can be combined in a container or basket to give a new look to old favorites.

On January 27 Karen Weir and I will have a seminar on containers and plan to show you some ways you can transition your plants from winter to spring. We will discuss plants that can live indoors all winter and move to the porch in the spring. You may want to learn all about the tough plants that can stay inside all year, but not look boring. We will talk about that as well. Plan to come to the seminar, enjoy lunch in the tearoom, and get some one-on-one help in the greenhouse.

#### **Container Planting for Late Winter & Spring Seminar**

Saturday, January 27 at 11 am.

Presented by Karen Weir and Gay Houston



*"Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right"...Oprah Winfrey*



## *Get Ready for the Birds... Sharon Murry, Staff*

**The purple martins will be coming back soon.** Will you be ready for them? These birds are a real treat to have just outside your back door. They're the largest bird in the swallow family, yet are more nimble on the wing than a fighter pilot. They catch many insects on the fly, including flies, beetles, moths, wasps, mosquitoes and dragonflies. If you have a purple martin house up and have had the pleasure of the family returning to it each year, you obviously know what these birds like. They are finicky birds. They want their houses placed just so. It could be a small house for one family or one of the fancy apartment style condo's that will hold all their relatives. They nest in colonies of six to eight pairs.

The male purple martins are shimmering blue-black all over while the females and younger males have light grayish breasts. The older males, called scouts, will soon be arriving from their winter habitats. If you are planning to attract purple martins to your property this year, by February 15<sup>th</sup> you should have your martin house in place. Most of the time, they'll return to the same house year after year, but sometimes they are attracted to new sites. If there are colonies in your area, your chances of attracting new birds to a new house increase. If you don't see immediate action at your martin house, don't get discouraged. Martin migration is a long drawn-out affair. Some later arrivals, primarily last year's young, won't begin nesting until the end of June.

The female selects a male and its nesting cavity and together each couple builds a nest. The females gather mud and sticks

that they form into a platform lined with straw, feathers and paper. Males add green leaves. The female incubates the eggs for just over 2 weeks until they hatch. Both parents work together collecting insects and feeding the young until they leave the nest about a month after hatching. Sometimes a second brood is raised.

If you will be putting up your first martin house this year, be sure to choose the right location. It should not be too close to trees or buildings. Put it approximately 40 feet from a house or building. Martins require a large open area. If you have a pond in an open area, this would be an ideal site. The house itself should be mounted 12 to 20 feet high preferably on a telescoping or jointed pole. This type of pole makes it easy to put up and take down the house for yearly cleaning. Martins will not come back to a house that has been used by sparrows or starlings over the winter. Sparrow nests are very messy and a martin keeps its nest very neat. Be sure the pole is kept free of vines and shrubs that might allow predators access to the house. The house itself can be as large as you like but it should be painted white. This will keep it cool in the summer. A perch on top gives the birds a place to rest and watch.

Purple Martins are fascinating birds and one of a very few that are dependent on humans to provide their housing. Your reward will be their return year after year to dine on the many insects that we call pests. If you don't have a martin house, why not put one up this year. You will certainly enjoy their chatter and dive bombing shows all summer long.



### **Don't Miss These Special Valentine's Events!**

#### *Valentine's Floral Luncheon*

**Monday, February 5 at 12 noon. \$25 pp.**

#### *Romance your Sweetheart Valentine's Day Dinner*

**Wednesday, February 14 - 6:30 pm \$25 pp plus tax & gratuity. Beer & Wine available.**

For reservations confirmed by credit card, call the Café at (936) 870-3277.

*"Ah me! Love can not be cured by herbs"... Ovid*



## *Cyclamen, Winter Weather Color...David Albrecht, Horticulturist*

If you are looking for a winter annual that is a little different and a little more refined, you have found it with cyclamen. With flower colors of white, red, pink, and magenta, this plant can give a very formal look. It's reflexed petals and silvery mottling on the foliage are the two most notable characteristics of cyclamen.

You will find that cyclamen cost a little more than other winter annuals, but they are well worth the added expense. Their higher price is due to the fact that cyclamen is actually a corm that costs growers a considerable amount adding greatly to their production costs.

The cyclamen most often available to us is

*Cyclamen cilician* which is originally from the coniferous woodlands in the Cilician Mountains of Turkey. This cyclamen prefers at least some shade. Although this cyclamen comes from a region that experiences wet winters, a well drained soil bed is much appreciated along with its daily watering. While not all species of cyclamen will endure a frost, this cyclamen is very cold hardy having survived a zone 4 area of New York state. However, cyclamen do not like warm temperatures. Prolonged, warm temperatures (above 65°F) will cause the plant to quit flowering and go into dormancy. Continued cool temperatures will keep cyclamen in bloom throughout the winter for much enjoyment.



## *Romance Your Sweetheart...Shirleen McDonald, Staff*

**Romance your Sweetheart Valentine's Day Dinner...**a romantic Valentine's Day Candlelight Dinner will be held on Wednesday, February 14 at 6:30 pm.

**Romance your Sweetheart** with a gourmet meal followed by your choice of a decadent dessert from our dessert tray. Our special valentine menu choices will be Prime Rib Au Jus with a horseradish sauce served over mashed potatoes with vegetable medley; Basil Chicken served over rice pilaf and with vegetable medley; or Mahi Mahi Provincial over rice pilaf with vegetable medley. Each

entrée will be served with a garden salad and homemade bread. Beer & wine by the glass or bottle will be available.

Make your reservations early by calling the Café at (936) 870-3277. All reservations must be guaranteed by a credit card and are subject to a 48-hour cancellation. \$29.95 pp plus tax & gratuity.

*Café M. Bloomers*

**(936) 870-3277**



## *Valentine's Floral Luncheon...Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers*

Join us Monday, February 5 at 12 noon for our annual Valentine's Floral Luncheon. Each table will be decorated with a different theme showcasing some of Spring's favorite flowers: Tulips, Pansies, Daffodils, Freesias, Ranunculus and Bluebonnets!

Café M. Bloomers will prepare a sumptuous meal. After the luncheon, Tricia Barksdale of Petals 'n Bloomers will discuss tips for working with specific flowers and how she designed the tablescapes. This delightful afternoon will chase away the Winter doldrums and encourage your own creative ideas. If you are hosting a spring party yourself, this afternoon will inspire you.

## *Valentine's Floral Luncheon*

Monday, February 5

12 Noon

\$25 pp

*Call Café M. Bloomers at*

**(936) 870-3277**

to make your reservations confirmed by credit card.



*"Love is a symbol of eternity. It wipes out all sense of time, destroying all memory of a beginning and all fear of an end"...Author Unknown*



## *What's Cooking at the Café....Melissa Rodriguez, Staff*

### **Café M. Bloomers would like to introduce our new executive chef, Terry Howry!**

Chef Howry has a plethora of knowledge and experience in gourmet cuisine and is a certified wine connoisseur.

Chef Howry holds an associate of culinary arts degree from the Texas Culinary Academy and is a member of the Brazos County Chapter of the Texas Chef's Association. Chef Howry also continues his education in Asian Techniques at CIA Greystone in St. Helena, California.

Chef Howry has won the hearts of locals with his homemade chocolate crème brûlée served daily at Café M. Bloomers. Come and experience for yourself Chef Howry's culinary techniques ranging from European to Asian methods. Our courteous service and Chef Howry's epicurean flavor make Café M. Bloomers the perfect one-day get-away destination.

Watch for Chef Howry's upcoming events coming this Spring! Plans are underway for an Italian cuisine cooking school featuring Amici Olive Oil, Chef Howry's Cooking School Series and a Texas Wine Vintner's Dinner. Dates and times will be announced on our website and through our email notices.

### *Make it a Gourmet New Year!*

Gather together friends and family and enjoy a deliciously prepared gourmet lunch and dessert while dining in a serene garden setting.

Chef Howry looks forward to meeting you!

*Café M. Bloomers*

**(936) 870-3277**



## *The Creative Angle... Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n' Bloomers*

**Our personalities and talents become more defined over time.** "Left-brained" people are referred to as analytical and logical. They focus on the details. "Right-brained" individuals are more intuitive and creative. In viewing a project or situation they see the whole picture.

However, Alan Black, Ph.D., founder and owner of Cre8ng People, Places and Possibilities, says that we are all born creative. Ninety-eight percent of children tested at age 5 showed strong creative tendencies. Unfortunately, that percentage drops tremendously by the fourth grade and even more so by the tenth grade. So what happens to the creativity? Society, families, friends (especially peer pressure) and schools suppress those out-of-the-box ideas.

You can play a part in restoring some of that creative angle. Be a cheerleader — to those around you whether they are your family, co-workers, acquaintances or friends. Your encouragement will spark their creativity, which will prompt your own.

One way (and my personal favorite) to do this is to GIVE FLOWERS. Remember the 2005 Texas A&M Research which concluded that flowers and plants in an environment promote creativity, problem-solving and team-building. The moral of this story? Give flowers, not just for occasions but to encourage someone. Your creativity and theirs is bound to blossom!



*Come See Why Southern Living Magazine Ranked Us  
in the Top 50 Shops!*

**Southern Living Magazine Nov. 2006 Issue**

*"The poetry of the earth is never dead"... John Keats*





## *Calendar of Events...*

### **Saturday Seminars - and they are Free!**

**"Pruning for Spring"** - Saturday, January 20 at 11 am. Presented by John Warner, Urban District Forester, Texas Forest Service.

**"Container Planting for Late Winter and Spring"** - Sat., January 27 at 11 am. Presented by Karen Weir and Gay Houston.

**"Antique Roses"** - Saturday, February 3 at 11 am. Presented by Glenn Schroeter of the Antique Rose Emporium.

**"Using Compost & Organics for Better Gardens"** - Saturday, February 10 at 11 am. Presented by Warren Johnson.

**"EarthKind Roses"** - Saturday, March 3 at 11 am. Presented by Gaye Hammond, Rose Expert.

**"Herbs for Now & Later"** - Saturday, March 24 at 11 am. Presented by Ann Wheeler, Log House Herb Farm.

**"Jazz Up Your Landscape Plantings"** - Saturday, March 31 at 11 am. Presented by Dr. Doug Welsh.

**"Accessorizing the Landscape"** - Saturday, April 28 at 11 am. Presented by Dr. Bill Welch.

**"Basil, Basil & More Basil"** - Saturday, May 12 at 11 am. Presented by Ann Wheeler, Log House Herb Farm.

### **Teas, Luncheons & Dinners**

**"Let it Snow Tea"** — Sunday, January 28 from 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15 pp.

**"Valentine's Floral Luncheon"** - Monday, February 5 at 12 noon. \$25 pp. Tablescapes presented by Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers Florist.

**"Romance Your Sweetheart" Valentine's Day Dinner**—Wednesday, February 14 at 6:30 pm. \$ 29.95 pp plus tax & gratuity. Beer & wine available.

**"Mother/Daughter" Tea** just in time for Mother's Day! - Sunday, May 6. 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15 pp.

**For Reservations confirmed by credit card, call Café M. Bloomers at (936) 870-3277.**

### **Coming Events This Spring!**

**Italian Cuisine Cooking School** featuring Amici Olive Oil.

**Chef Howry's Cooking School Series**

**Texas Wine Vintner's Dinner**

**Dates and times for these Spring Events will be announced on our website and through our email notices.**

For more information on our seminars, visit us at [www.MarthasBloomers.com](http://www.MarthasBloomers.com).

To Register for Free Saturday Seminars: Call (936) 870-4044 or email: [registration@Marthasbloomers.com](mailto:registration@Marthasbloomers.com).

We welcome your suggestions for future seminars.

Please email to: [suggestions@MarthasBloomers.com](mailto:suggestions@MarthasBloomers.com)

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



**Store Hours Mon-Sat 9 - 6 Sun 11 - 5 Martha's Bloomers (936) 825-7400**  
**Café M. Bloomers (936) 870-3277 Tea Room Serving Tues-Sun 11 - 4**

