



October/November/December 2006

# *M. Bloomers*

## *A Garden Journal*

*"Let us be grateful to people who make us happy;  
they are the charming gardeners who make our  
souls blossom"...Marcel Proust*

### *Ring in the Holidays... Shirleen McDonald, Staff*

**With the holidays quickly approaching we are again excited to invite you to Holiday in the Garden!** To you, our valued customer, please join us on Friday, November 17 for our annual **Holiday in the Garden!** The evening's holiday festivities, refreshments and light hors d'oeuvres will be from 6:30 pm to 9 pm.

As in years past, every corner of Martha's Bloomers will be bursting with the sights and sounds of the holiday season.

Be inspired by the enchantment of **Holiday in the Garden.** Bring your holiday shopping list and receive free, festive gift-bag wrapping with each purchase.

And to ring in the New Year, enjoy a special

evening at the Café...bring that special someone for a **New Year's Eve Candlelight Dinner** on Sunday, December 31 at 6:00 pm. The Candlelight Dinner will include a sumptuous meal, including a decadent dessert, coffee or tea. The cost is \$27.95 per person. Beer and wine will be available.

For New Year's Eve Dinner reservations, call Bonnie at Café M. Bloomers,  
(936) 870-3277.

**Make your reservations early!!!**

# *Happy Holidays!*



*"Your mind is a Garden, your thoughts are the seeds,  
the harvest can be either Flowers or Weeds"...author unknown*



## *Giving of the Growing Green... Gay Houston, Staff*

**Blooming, growing, living---plants are a wonderful thought for Christmas.** More and more diverse plants are now available for Holiday giving, and can be the perfect present for the person who is hard to buy for as well as the dedicated gardener. Most holiday plants are tropical plants that do well in a well-lighted area, but out of direct sunlight.

Christmas cactus is growing in popularity as it becomes available in more and more colors. It flowers in the winter and is native to Brazil. Its pendulous stems make it a great choice for hanging baskets. It is best grown in thirteen hours of darkness with night temperatures between 55 and 65 degrees. A new Christmas cactus should be kept in a cool room that is dark at night. The growing medium should never be over watered and should be kept slightly dry to the touch. Avoid sudden changes of temperature, light or other factors such as very wet or very dry conditions. This can cause buds to drop. After the holidays, keep in a cool room until all danger of frost is past. Then the plants can grow on a shaded porch until time to bring in for the next holiday season.

Anthuriums are another blooming plant that make a great Holiday gift. They can tolerate very extreme temperatures and require bright, indirect light. They need to grow vigorously in order to

continue blooming, so fertilize regularly with a liquid 1:2:1, but flush the containers occasionally to keep salts at a minimum. Anthuriums need good drainage, and do better if pot-bound. They are now available in a wide range of colors, but bright red is still the favorite. There are "mini" varieties also available for cute containers in seasonal themes.

The large and varied family of Bromeliads is also a favorite for the unusual gift. Since there are seven families and hundreds of varieties of bromeliads, it is best to look up individual types and read about care. Most want shade and warmth as they often grow in rain forests. Indoors bromeliads need bright light, air circulation, clean water and warmth. Never leave bromeliads in soggy soil if planted in soil. If your species has a "cup" in the center, the cup will hold water. Keep water in the cup, but discard the water every two weeks and replenish. Rain water is always best. If planted in soil (which is really a growing medium) keep moist but not soggy. As with other tropicals, bromeliads will thrive on a shady porch or even in a shady flower bed in the warm months.

Other favorite holiday plants are rosemary, cyclamen, and, of course, poinsettias. Rosemary and cyclamen are great for outdoor use in the cool months. Ask us at Martha's Bloomers for best care of these and other plants coming soon for the Season!



## *Earthworms (more than just fish bait)... Sharon Murry, Staff*

**Earthworms in your soil indicate that you have healthy, fertile soil.** Birds pulling an earthworm out of the soil or an earthworm dangling from your fish hook are pictures that come to mind when someone mentions earthworms.. If your soil is compacted, low in organic matter or has been treated with toxic pesticides, more than likely, you do not have any earthworms.

Earthworms tunnel into the soil, loosening it and allowing water and air to get to your plant's roots. Earthworms swallow the soil and the soil they swallow passes through the worm's body and is left behind in the form of "castings". Castings are excellent fertilizer for plant roots and have a very high available content of nitrogen, phosphorus, magnesium and potash.

Earthworms are miniature compost machines! Compost is excellent mulch and a soil amendment to attract earthworms. Mulch provides food and shelter for the earthworms. During warm weather, the earthworms tend to stay

toward the top of the soil. To test your soil, dig up a one foot square area of soil. If you do not see any earthworms, or your soil is so compacted that your shovel will barely go into the dirt, your soil and plants will definitely benefit by adding earthworms. Many gardeners measure the health of their soil by the number of earthworms they have. To see a difference in worm activity in your soil, lay down chopped leaves and grass clippings on your existing garden soil. "Feed" the worms by adding vegetable scraps, more leaves and grass clippings and keep the area moist. If you have a compost pile, add shredded newspaper and coffee grounds or add all these ingredients to your garden soil. A light sprinkling of corn meal on the surface of the soil can promote rapid reproduction.

Use natural forms of insect control as the use of toxic insecticides will make the earthworms burrow very deep into the soil or kill them. By encouraging earthworms, you will be able to fertilize your lawn and plants, feed the birds and go fishing! It can't get much easier than that.



*"Gardening is ultimately a folly whose goal is to provide delight"... Deborah Needle*



## *Interesting Women...Ann Wheeler, Log House Herb Farm*

**Don't miss our October Luncheons and Book Reviews!** Two "interesting" book reviews by Ann Wheeler of the Log House Herb Farm are scheduled on Monday, October 2 and Monday, October 16 at Martha's Bloomers. Both talks will feature interesting women and their gardening habits, attitudes, likes and dislikes, and will shed some entertaining light on how our gardens express ourselves.

On October 2 at noon, the book review "**Interesting Women and their Gardens**" will delve into the personalities of two women of another time. Elizabeth von Arnim's book Elizabeth and Her German Garden, first published in 1898, has become a beloved classic, a gem of a book. Her views on life, marriage, and motherhood are liberally seasoned with gardening wit and wisdom. Fans of the classic movie, "Enchanted April", which she wrote, will recognize her unique view of the world as she reports on the many trials involved in creating an English garden within the neglected family estate of her Prussian husband.

During the book review we will discuss the terrific collection of garden articles written by Katharine S. White and collected by her writer husband, E.B. White (perhaps best known for Charlotte's Web.) The collection, entitled Onward and Upward in the Garden, covers a wide-ranging number of topics, from gardening catalogs to hybridizing and flower-arranging. A woman of strong opinions, Katharine White's articles are characterized by humor, good sense and intelligent responses to the challenges of the garden.

The second book review, "**Madalene Hill, Texas Herb Pioneer**" being held on October 16, at 11 am and again at 1 pm, will discuss a subject much closer to home. Focusing on Madalene

Hill, our neighbor and the herbal pioneer for Texas gardeners, we will review the handbook for our area, Southern Herb Growing, written by Madalene and her daughter Gwen Barclay. Updated by recent talks with Madalene and Gwen and by numerous visits to the botanical collections located at Festival Hill at Round Top, we will take a fresh look at the book and its many offerings for the gardener of today and tomorrow. The pairs approach to cooking with and collecting herbs will be included in the review.

Both book reviews promise to be entertaining as well as informative, and will provide a background for discussion and idea-sharing. Participants are encouraged to bring their own opinions and attitudes to the review to add to those of our formally-identified "interesting women". Both luncheon/book reviews will offer lunch prepared by Café M. Bloomers and beautiful table decorations presented by Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers Florist.

### **"Interesting Women and their Gardens Luncheon & Book Review"**

Monday, October 2 at Noon

### **"Madalene Hill, Texas Herb Pioneer Luncheon & Book Review"**

Monday, October 16 at 11 am and 1 pm.

Luncheons: \$22 pp plus tax & gratuity

Make your reservations today confirmed by credit card. Call Bonnie at

*Café M. Bloomers*

**(936) 870-3277.**




## *The Home Run Rose...David Albrecht, Horticulturist*

**If you like the Knock Out series of roses, you will like the Home Run rose even better.** The Home Run rose not only has the same black spot resistance as its father, the Knock Out rose, but also boasts complete resistance to powdery mildew. There is also greater tolerance to downy mildew as well. The Home Run rose is also supposed to have a deeper red color than the Knock Out, especially during cooler temperatures.

The Home Run is a dark green leaf, five petal, single, red rose. It has only a slight fragrance, but is quick to bloom, and very floriferous throughout the year being almost always in color. The Home Run is a repeat bloomer with a very short cycle of

about 30 days as opposed to the average of 40 to 45 days for the repeat bloom characteristic. Home Run never seems to have a huge flush of flowers at one time, but always seems to exhibit several blooms in a wide variety of developmental stages. It is a medium-size shrub rose with a mature height and width of approximately 4 feet.

When pruning the Home Run rose it prefers to have a light shaping over a heavy or deep pruning. As a mature plant, it is not necessary to frequently prune this rose since it stays full and has a naturally well-rounded shape. 

*"You do not need to know anything about a plant to know that it is beautiful...Montagu Don*



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

The holidays are here! Celebrate this holiday season with Café M. Bloomers! Mark your calendars and join us for our festive upcoming events:

**"Pumpkin Harvest Tea"** - Sunday, October 29. 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15 pp.

**"Holiday in the Garden"** - Friday, November 17. 6:30 pm to 9 pm.


**"Holiday Cheer Tea"** - Sunday, December 3. 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15 pp.

**"Red Hat, Red Hot Holiday Tea"** - Sunday, December 10. 2 pm to 4 pm. \$15 pp.

Come and enjoy an afternoon of tea with family or friends...and get a jump on the holiday shopping season with beautiful, personalized

gift baskets from the Café. Visit our gourmet shop to see our showcased baskets...Bakers Basket, Cooks Basket, Hot Tea Basket, or design your own basket from the gourmet shop's delicious treats.

Take the stress out of your holiday party planning...Café M. Bloomers is the perfect place to hold your special holiday party or shower.

Entertaining at home this year? Café M. Bloomers can help you with that too! Just call Bonnie at Café M. Bloomers at (936) 870-3277 and ask about our special holiday appetizer platters and baked goods. Pick up an order form today and make this holiday season a relaxed and fun time for you. 

### *Petals 'n Bloomers Fall Open House*

*presented by Tricia Barksdale*

**Friday & Saturday, October 6 & 7**

**9 am to 6 pm**

The richness of Autumn's palette inspires the creativity in all of us!

\*New varieties of fresh roses in orange & apricot shades

\*Silk Wreaths & Centerpieces

\*Spicy Candles

\*Sneak Peek of Christmas

\*The Transitional Wreath that goes from Fall thru Winter

**Gift with Purchase**



## *Be a Winner...Shirleen McDonald, Staff*

**Helen Wise is the sixth winner of our Be A Winner Contest!** She received a gift certificate for two for lunch at Café M. Bloomers! Helen submitted this great pumpkin dip recipe.

### **Pumpkin Dip**


4 cups powdered sugar  
2 - 8 oz. packages cream cheese, softened  
1 can (30 oz) pumpkin pie filling  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1 tsp. ground ginger

In a large mixing bowl combine sugar and cream cheese, beating until well blended.

Beat in pumpkin pie filling, ground cinnamon and ground ginger. Store in airtight container in refrigerator. Serve with ginger snap cookies.

### **This is great to serve during the fall and winter months!**

If you want to "Be a Winner" just send in your favorite recipe, garden tip or question to [gardenjournal@marthasbloomers.com](mailto:gardenjournal@marthasbloomers.com).

Please keep your recipes or garden tips coming and watch to see if you are our next "Winner"! 

*"Living Nature, not dull art*

*Shall plan my ways and rule my Heart"...John Henry Cardinal Newman*



## Calendar of Events...

### Saturday Seminars - and they are Free!

“**Planting Bulbs for Spring**” – Saturday, October 21 at 11 am. Presented by Margaret Cherry, TMCNP # 496.

“**Holiday Decorations**” - Saturday, October 28 at 11 am. Presented by Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers.

“**Orchids for Christmas**” - Saturday, December 2 at 11 am. Presented by Rainer Fink, Orchid Specialist.

### Dinner, Luncheons, Book Reviews, Teas and Open Houses:

“**Interesting Women and their Gardens Luncheon & Book Review**” —Monday, October 2 at Noon. Book review presented by Ann Wheeler, Log House Herb Farm and table decorations presented by Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers. \$22 pp plus tax & gratuity.

“**Fall Open House**” - Friday and Saturday, October 6 & 7, 9 am to 6 pm. Presented by Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers Florist. No charge.

“**Madalene Hill, Texas Herb Pioneer Luncheon & Book Review**” —Monday, October 16 at 11am and 1pm. Book review presented by Ann Wheeler, Log House Herb Farm and table decorations presented by Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers. \$22 pp plus tax & gratuity.

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“**New Year's Eve Candlelight Dinner**” - Sunday, December 31. 6:00 pm. \$27.95 pp.

#### **Luncheons, Book Reviews and Teas:**

**For reservations confirmed by credit card,**

**call Bonnie at Café M. Bloomers — (936) 870-3277.**

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)

## Fun Jobs...

### **Supervisor for Landscape Crew**

Experience in landscape installation and valid Texas drivers license required.  
Apply three ways: In person at Martha's Bloomers - 8101 Hwy. 6 Bypass, Navasota;  
fax confidential resume to: (936) 825-7703; email to: [funjob@marthasbloomers.com](mailto:funjob@marthasbloomers.com)



**Store Hours Mon-Sat 9 - 6 Sun 11 - 5 Martha's Bloomers (936) 870-4111**  
**Café M. Bloomers (936) 870-3277 Tea Room Serving Tues-Sun 11 - 4**

