



September/October 2003 Volume 2, Issue 6

M. Bloomers

A Garden Journal

*"Winter is an etching, spring a watercolor, summer an oil painting
and autumn a mosaic of them all"....Stanley Horowitz*

Café M. Bloomers, A Tea Room

Despite what the thermometer says, fall will soon arrive in Texas. Even though it may be 100 degrees, it is time to treat your taste buds to specialty fall beverages that can be enjoyed no matter what the temperature.

Café M. Bloomer's homemade blend of orange spice tea is a favorite among our customers and can be purchased to enjoy at home. This herbal instant tea is decaffeinated and sugar free and is flavored with rose hips, geranium, lemon peel, orange peel and cloves. Orange spice tea can be served hot or cold. However, to bring out the flavor of the tea, it must be mixed in hot water. Once mixed, the tea can be iced or chilled to your liking. Garnish it with an orange slice or a cinnamon stick for extra flavor and decorative flair.

Flavored coffee is a fall favorite. Make your own version of caramel coffee by placing ½ cup of caramel dessert topping into the empty pot of your coffee maker. Place 6 tablespoons of ground coffee in the brew basket and add 4 ½ cups water to your ma-

chine. Brew the coffee as usual and when brewing is complete, stir until well mixed. Top each cup with a dollop of whipped cream and crushed toffee.

Homemade apple cider also makes for a festive fall drink. To enjoy this beverage at home, bring sliced apples (one apple per cup of water) to a boil in a medium sized pot. Add nutmeg, cinnamon sticks and cloves (to taste) while the cider is hot and then remove from heat. Enjoy the cider warm or cold.

Your family and friends will enjoy the fall season with these warming drinks. Turn your air conditioner on to provide the chill in the air if necessary. Set a festive table using the colors of the season and enjoy your own Tea Party!

For Same Day Call-Ahead Reservations or Arbor Room Reservations for groups of 13 or more, call *Café M. Bloomers* at

(936) 870-3277.



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

The Society of American Florists offers these tips for purchasing flowers:

Be Spontaneous! People may already be accustomed to receiving flowers on birthdays and anniversaries. (A word to the wise — they will probably notice the absence of flowers on these occasions too!) However, flowers given for no other reason than “I was thinking of you today,” make a great impact because they are unexpected.

Don't Overlook Anyone! A bouquet can express a range of emotions from romantic to friendly to something in between. Remember the unsung hero or behind-the-scenes worker to express your appreciation.

Flowers are Never Boring! With year-round flower production going on here, in South America and in Europe, more varieties than ever are available. This diversity coupled with the unique appeal of flowers means a bouquet can be given anytime without losing

its special charm. Your imagination and thoughtfulness can be seen in each arrangement.

Try Something New! More people are now aware of the multitude of flower varieties, and are fascinated to see them. Be distinctive for giving unusual flowers, colors, or design styles. It will not go unnoticed.

Get More Bloom for the Buck! Flower prices are largely based on supply and demand. Hence, roses peak on Valentine's Day, but are a great value in the summer.

Don't miss Tricia's seminar “Fall Decorations” on Sat., Sept. 13 at 11 am. Please register at **(936) 825-8577** or email: registration@MarthasBloomers.com.

Send a Smile Any Day!
Petals 'n Bloomers Florist
(936) 825-8577



Irrigation... David Smith, Landscaping...L.I. 5730

Rain Sensors – Small Investment Pays Huge Dividend...Numerous studies have shown that in Texas automatic sprinkler systems commonly use 30-50% more water than is generally needed by our landscapes. Much of this waste occurs in spring and fall when rainfall is high and plants require less water. This results in unnecessary high water bills, overly saturated soils, poor drainage and poor plant quality. Also, some water supplies used for landscape irrigation contains high levels of salts or other chemicals. This too can be detrimental to plant growth. There is a solution to eliminating unnecessary irrigation events. The solution is simple...install a rain shut-off sensor.

Rain shut off sensors are used in conjunction with your automatic sprinkler controllers to over-ride normal controller programming when rainfall occurs. Most rain sensors are adjustable and thus allow you to set the sensor to activate at a different rainfall amounts (1/8-inch, 1/4-inch, etc.). Rain sensors are available in many brands and models and can be purchased at all major

home and garden outlets for under \$50.00. Though slightly more expensive, wireless rain sensors are available through nearly all irrigation parts suppliers.

Installation is fairly simple. With a general understanding of electrical wiring, do-it-yourselfers can install a rain sensor in a matter of minutes. Others may need assistance for proper installation. The most important thing to remember is to install rain sensors in a location free from obstructions, such as atop a privacy fence or house eave. (*Side Note: Please don't install inside a garage, under a tree or inside the sprinkler controller box. Yes ... it does happen!!!*)

If you have an automatic irrigation system and no rain sensor, you could be wasting hundreds of dollars per year. Invest in a rain sensor, and put those savings into more plants! If you need assistance with installing a rain sensor or with your irrigation system in general, we can help.

For Martha's Bloomers' Landscaping & Design, call (936) 825-7777, ext. 108.




"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower"....Albert Camus



The Season's Best Plant...Gay Houston, Staff

Cuphea is well-known by many as the familiar Mexican or False Heather. It is a mounding plant with tiny, glossy green leaves and purple blooms. However, there are several other varieties available that will provide brilliant constant color in the spring, summer, and fall garden.

Two of our favorites at Martha's Bloomers are David Verity and Tricolor. They are both known as the cigar plant due to the shape of the bloom. David Verity is a bright orange and Tricolor is blue-purple, red, and white.

They are shrubby perennials that get about two to three feet tall. They bloom "all over" for a very long time and will come back in the spring. Planted now they will provide a lot of color and will be ready for another season next year. Watch for several other types we carry including the adorable "bat-faced" cuphea that stays fairly small, has bright green leaves, and purple and red blooms that look like a little "bat face". Giant cuphea and pink mist cuphea are often available and great garden plants. All love sun, heat, and once established are drought tolerant. 

*Martha's Bloomers proudly sponsors GARDEN SUCCESS!
with Doug Welsh every Thursday at Noon to 1 PM on KAMU-FM 90.9.
Tune in and turn on to more Successful Gardening!*

New News...from the Store Front

The Stars are Bright at Martha's Bloomers! Whether you are born and raised in Texas, or are a recent "transplant", our new Texas Room will strike your fancy! The Texas Room is filled with stars of all kinds, candle holders, plant hangars, cabinet pulls and other "Texas" décor for your home, garden or office. For your 'out-of-state' visitors, surprise them with a special Texas memento to take back home with them.

And don't miss seeing some of our other new products...colorful enamelware dinnerware and cookware...**Wind Devas—Spiral Art Mobiles and Beaded Curtains and Windchimes.** 

New News...from the Tea Room

New!! Same Day Call-Ahead Seating!

For more convenient seating at Café M. Bloomers, try our new 30-minute call-ahead reservations for your group of four or less. For example, when leaving to come to the Café for lunch, just give us a call on the phone no more than 30-minutes before you plan to arrive. We will give you a reservation number and put your name on our table list. If you and your party arrive within 30-minutes, you will be seated in the order that your name is on the table list. If you or any of your party are delayed beyond 30-minutes, your name will be placed at the bottom of the list and you will be seated in that order. We hope that this new reservation service will mean less wait time for your table. **Call Café M. Bloomers at (936) 870-3277.**

Sorry, but we cannot seat any party until all guests have arrived.

We only accept advanced reservations for parties of 13 or more. 

"FALL IS FOR LANDSCAPING" Seminar
Saturday, September 20th at 11:00 am
Presented by Dr. Doug Welsh
To register, Call (936) 870-4044 or email us at: registration@MarthasBloomers.com

"You can't hide your true colours as you approach the autumn of your life"



Organic News... Sharon Murry, Staff

Diatomaceous Earth... Many "Natural Gardeners" have heard about and use Diatomaceous Earth or D.E. D.E. may be used in many different ways. D.E. is a non-toxic, natural product intended for use as an insect control. It is the fossil remains of microscopic one-celled marine algae called "diatoms". In the milling process, the diatom skeleton is cracked apart exposing microscopic silica needles that will scratch the thin waxy surface of many insects and cause them to lose their body fluids and die. The finished product is a fine powdery material that is easy to use and economical. D.E. is harmless to humans and warm-blooded animals and will not harm earthworms. Note, as with any dusty material, when using D.E. for a long period of time, wear some kind of mask to prevent breathing in the dust. Since D.E. is safe, it can be used in many areas where chemicals are undesirable. Spread D.E. around areas in-

festes with roaches, spiders, slugs, ants and other troublesome crawling insects. Dust your attic with a thin layer and behind or under your refrigerator, dishwasher and washer/dryer. Add 2% D.E. to animal or pet food to control mites and worms. Use D.E. in your plant foliar spray to deter grasshoppers. (Mix 4 oz D.E., 2 oz molasses, with 2 drops liquid soap per gallon of water. Adding 1 oz of orange oil and/or garlic-pepper tea makes a more potent deterrent. If you make your own orange oil, you can use 1 cup of it in this recipe.) Never spray your plants in direct sunlight. Also, you will have to re-apply D.E. after it rains. You may also dust D.E. around the base of your plants (indoor and outdoor). As the plant is watered or it rains, the D.E. will work its way to the roots and be used as a mineral supplement. D.E. used in swimming pool filters should not be used as a substitute for natural D.E.



Don't
Miss

ANNUAL ANTIQUE SALE UNDER THE BIG TENT!

Friday, Saturday & Sunday September 5-7 9 am to 6 pm.

Primitive and American Antiques
Garden and Home Décor

Something's Cooking...at Martha's Bloomers!

What's Cooking at Martha's Bloomers...

Popular Houston culinary instructor Molly Fowler is returning to Martha's Bloomers this fall with great new menus for September and October classes! She teaches techniques and tips, incorporates fresh herbs, and demonstrates great new kitchen products as she entertains the group with her trademark traditions of delicious fun and *Entertaining With Ease!*

Join us Friday, September 19 at 6:30 PM for "Fast, Fabulous Gourmet"! This demonstration-style cooking class features a Salad of Mixed Greens with Roquefort, Pears and Pecans with a Celery Vinaigrette, Pan-Seared Salmon with Champagne Shallot Sauce on Wilted Spinach, Creamy Lemon Rice, and a Luscious Almond Torte with Fresh Berries for dessert.

On Tuesday, October 14 at 6:30 PM, Molly presents "A Cozy Fall Dinner for Friends" just in time for cooler weather! Enjoy learning and sampling recipes for Butternut Bisque, Spinach, Grapefruit and Avocado Salad with Blood Orange Vinaigrette, Marinated Pork Tenderloin with Apricot Sauce on Wild Rice, and Spiked Apple Crisp a la Mode.

You will sample every dish while enjoying wine or beer with your dinner. Everyone will take home a complete recipe packet and a multitude of new entertainment ideas! We received many requests for Molly's return after her hit summertime classes. We're sure you'll find her fall classes will help you as you plan your end-of-year get-togethers.

Join the fun!

Limited seating. \$40 per person. Reservations confirmed by credit card are required.

Call *Café M. Bloomers* at (936) 870-3277.



"All gardeners live in beautiful places because they make them so"... Joseph Toubert



Ask Martha & Bloomer

Dear Martha,

How can I attract ladybugs to my garden?

Bloomer here... Their favorite food is aphids, but they also eat scale, mealy bugs and mites. Plants such as cosmos, coreopsis, scented geraniums and even dandelions will attract them.

Dear Bloomer,

I purchased some ladybugs at Martha's Bloomers, when is the best time to release them?

Martha here.... Only release ladybugs after sun-down or before sun-up and after the area has been watered. Ladybugs navigate by the sun. In the evenings and early mornings they tend to say put.

Plan your Business or Personal Festive Holiday Gala at *Café M. Bloomers*.

Special Menus, Wine and Beer.

Contact Pamela Hays at *Café M. Bloomers* to discuss the various dinners available this holiday season. Call Now—We are already booking!

(936) 870-3277

Herbs of Fall - Ann Wheeler, Log House Herb Farm

Herbs in the Fall Kitchen Garden...In September, summer's lethargic gardener can be transformed into a whirling dervish of planning and planting. First, there's just a hint of coolness in the early morning, along with a few leaves drifting down and nostalgic recollections of the first day of school. Then along comes October, and magic happens once again.

But while September swelters, it's good to stand in a shady spot and plan your fall and winter kitchen garden, which includes herbs for the cooking pot.

Basil can still be planted for several weeks

“Plan your fall and winter kitchen garden, which includes herbs for the cooking pot”

with a productive harvest that can be preserved with oil in a rich paste and frozen in freezer bags for a delightful whiff and taste of summer on

any chilly day.

And coming along soon will be cool season classic annuals—parsley, dill, cilantro, chervil, lovage and others. But because September is often the Fahrenheit twin of August, their appearance in the best nurseries may be delayed a bit. Don't give up—it's only that nature's schedule doesn't always match the gardener's!

Perennial favorites like lemon balm, catnip, marjoram, oreganos, the rosemary, thyme, and sage varieties, and the lavenders also begin showing up during September and October.

Planning your fall kitchen herbs may involve estimating how much space will remain after summer's debris is cleared away. You must decide how much room you'll want for fall vegetables, and which herbs are culinary companions to the vegetables you'll grow.

You might begin by making a Martha's Bloomers' herbal wish list. Bring it to the nursery with you. Then as the various herbs become available, you'll remember to buy your old favorites as well as new herbs you want to try.

Enjoy the October magic this year by planning and planting the best ever herbal kitchen garden. The rewards will continue through our mostly mild winters and carry you through to the exhilaration of a new spring season.

What a splendid thing...the never-ending cycle of the garden!

Don't miss Ann Wheeler's free seminar, "Falling for Herbs", at 11 am Sat., Sept. 27. For reservations call **(936) 870-4044** or email: registration@MarthasBloomers.com.



"Autumn—the reprieve from Summer"...Mike Garofalo



September 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day/ Closed	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 "Fall Decorations" at 11 am by Tricia Barksdale
14	15	16	17	18	19 Cooking Class—Molly Fowler—6:30 pm—\$40	20 "Fall is for Landscaping" at 11 am by Dr. Doug Welsh
21	22	23 Fall Equinox	24	25	26	27 "Falling for Herbs" at 11 am by Ann Wheeler of Log House Herb Farm
28	29	30				

October 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 "Fall Bulbs for Spring Color" at 11 am by Margaret Cherry
12	13 Columbus Day	14 Cooking Class—Molly Fowler—6:30 pm—\$40	15	16	17	18 "Decorating for the Holidays" at 11 am by MB Staff
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 "Wildflowers" at 11 am by Dennis Marwardt
26	27	28	29	30	31 Halloween	

For more information on our seminars, visit us at www.MarthasBloomers.com. **Saturday Seminars are Free.**
To Register: Call (936) 870-4044 or email us at: registration@MarthasBloomers.com.



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