



September/October 2004 Volume 3, Issue 5

M. Bloomers

A Garden Journal

"...With summer's best of weather And autumn's best of cheer"...Author Unknown

It's New...From the Hot House.... Debbie McDowell

Journey to a New Tropical Paradise! A lush and lovely tropical oasis awaits you now

Lush and lovely...A tropical oasis awaits you now as our newly expanded greenhouse comes to life! As if peeking out from beyond the Café's stone patio, our newest expansion of antiquity proudly exhibits a unique rustic tin awning which prominently shades the entrance to this flourishing tropical paradise.

Even before you step through the nostalgic antique doors, the allure of lush foliage

"Specimen ficus to adorn a room tower above the many luscious house plants..."

at the entry entices you to step into this world of breathtaking space. The moist warm tropical air circulating within feels reminiscent of a Caribbean island getaway. Specimen ficus to adorn a room tower above the many luscious house plants capturing the

excitement and illusion of a jungle-like environment. The sound of water gently trickling down a fountain adds to the mystique and relaxing ambiance of these new surroundings. Don't be surprised if you feel the urge to grab your flip flops, light the tikki torch and settle into your beach chair with a tall cool drink!

As your journey takes you within this lush paradise, you'll be amazed at the spectacular display of exquisite and rare greenery throughout. Popular sizes of tropical varieties await you with explosive color and texture. Whether you're looking for an unusual fern or an exotic blooming orchid, this tropical haven is sure to provide just the perfect tropical specimen for your home or office.

The next time you yearn to get away from it all, we invite you to escape to Martha's Greenhouse where you can browse, relax and recapture your own *personal* tropical paradise getaway...*much closer to home.*



*"With a few flowers in my garden, half a dozen pictures and some books,
I live without envy"...de Vega*



Passion Vines, Beauty & Habitat... by Karen M. Breneman

Vines traditionally used to cover trellises are also important in the garden as habitat for butterflies, hummingbirds, and song birds. While providing cover to hide unsightly features in the landscape such as fences, air-conditioners and garbage cans, vines provide food, shelter, wildlife nesting sites, and make great ground covers.

The *Passiflora* or passion vines are the most exotic of the native vines. When the first Roman Catholic priests arrived in Texas and saw the native passionflower, they attached a symbolism to teach the story of the divine passion of Christ. The Church in Spain and Italy accepted the specimens sent from the new world and influenced the botanists to name the new species, *Passiflora incarnata*, the flower of the passion incarnate. There are variations, but the basic symbolism is as follows: the column rising from the center of the flower represents the cross; the corona, the crown of thorns; the three knoblike stigma, the nails; the five stamens, the five wounds of Christ; the bladelike leaves, the spear that pierced Christ's side; the curling tendrils suggest the whips and cords that tormented Him; the ten sepals and petals, the ten faithful Apostles—omitting Peter who denied Jesus and Judas who betrayed him; the purple blossoms, the purple robe in which Christ was mockingly dressed; and the white blossoms, represent the purity and brightness of Christ.

Another name for the native *P. incarnata* is Maypop. This is the anglicized version of the

Native American word *maracock* meaning rattle, because when dried the gourd like fruit seeds rattle like a maraca. Today, the fruit is used for jelly or jam.

Native Americans made poultices of the leaves of the passionflower to help heal bruises and other injuries. In folk medicine an extract of the fresh plant or powdered root or dried fruit and flower tops was used as a nerve sedative to treat general restlessness and to relieve insomnia and headache, dysmenorrhea, fever, and high blood pressure. The National Formulary recognized passionflower as a tranquilizer/sedative source from 1916-1936.

Man has hybridized the native light blue flowered vine resulting in many different named cultivars. One of the more popular is *Passiflora 'Incense'*, a dark blue flower with a light fragrance. Of the seven native passion vines, *P. incarnata* is the most common. The large red passion flower is not native to Texas, but South America. While lovely, this species does not provide benefit to wildlife. The long wing butterflies — Gulf Fritillary, Zebra long wing and Julia- will not lay eggs on the red flowered vine. They use only the native species and their hybrids. .

This perennial vine is dormant in the winter, prefers well drained, sandy loam soil and grows in dappled shade to full sun. Plant the native *Passiflora* species and hybrids and enjoy the exotic blooms, fragrance, and the added color and movement of the long wing butterflies.



Please Let Us Know How We Are Doing!

Please take a minute of your time to rate Café M. Bloomers at the new Houston Chronicle Online Dining Guide.

Just click on www.houstonchronicle.com/dining.

In "Search Restaurants" go to "Enter Restaurant Name" box and enter Café M. Bloomers. Click "Go".

Under "Search Results/Restaurant Listings" click on Café M. Bloomers.

Scroll down to "Rate and Review the Restaurant". Complete the brief review form. Then click "Send".

Thank you, *Café M. Bloomers*

"The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses"...Hanna Rion



The Fall Landscape.... Vickie Deike, Landscape Designer

Fall truly is the ideal time for planting. Once past the dog days of summer, shrubs and trees breathe a little sigh of relief along with the rest of us. Surviving the heat is quite stressful for most plants, which is why it can be beneficial to plant shrubs and trees when temperatures begin to drop. Installing plant material in the fall gives these new plants months of time to grow roots and become established before they are put through the heat stress of another summer. Additionally, because the temperatures are lower, planting in the fall will require less babysitting for your new kids. This means less work and more time to enjoy!

Although spring and summer abound with perennial color, that doesn't mean fall and winter have to be the slouches. Select plant material that will provide interest all year long. A couple of perennials that will kick in and give your garden a second wind once Summer flowers begin to fade are Mexican Bush Sage and Copper Canyon Daisy. Mexican Bush Sage is a shrub that wants full sun. It can grow to three feet high and wide. In the fall it puts on a wonderful display of showy lavender spikes.

Copper Canyon Daisy is a small shrub. Here in the Brazos Valley it will reach approximately two feet tall, and spread to three feet. It needs full sun and has a high heat tolerance, perfect for those sizzling westward facing walls. This daisy will provide a profusion of yellow-gold flowers in the fall until frost. It is excellent as a border or in masses.

Perennial displays are wonderful, but don't forget about evergreens. In the fall and winter, gardens are too often slightly bare. If you feel your garden is drab and a bit depressing through these months, you may need to invest in some evergreens. Evergreens are the cornerstones of the garden. If properly selected, they will provide substance in the fall and winter, and then set the stage for the spring and summer flowers.

Two good evergreen selections are Nandinas and Nellie R. Stevens hollies. With several varieties in the Nandina family there is surely one to fit everyone's needs. These plants range in size from one foot to six feet tall and can take sun or shade. Nandinas typically have a foliage color change and produce red berries during the fall and winter seasons.

Nellie R. Stevens is a large glossy-leaved holly that will take sun or shade. It can grow to fifteen plus feet, but typically can be maintained at eight to ten feet tall and six to eight feet wide. It can be left to its own devices to form a dense screen or with a little work it can be grown into a nice Christmas tree shape. Get those Christmas lights ready!

Don't forget, Martha's Bloomers provides landscape design and installation. Please call me, Vickie Deike, with any inquiries.

(936) 825-7777, ext. 104.

We would love to "Plant your Escape!"



We would like to introduce the newest member to the Martha's Bloomers family, Vickie Deike. Vickie joined Martha's Bloomers this July as the designer in our landscape department. She holds a degree in Landscape Architecture from Texas A&M University. Her past work split her time between Austin and Houston giving her experience in a wide range of landscape styles.

For Martha's Bloomers landscape services, please give Vickie a call at (936) 825-7777, ext. 104, send her an email, Vickie@marthasbloomers.com, or just stop in and say Hi!

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

Decorative Trends... Move over Shabby Chic! Here comes Citrus Chic! The bright orange, yellow and green of citrus fruits can be added to your current color scheme to spice up your décor. Lime green added to a red and white kitchen provides an updated look. A touch of orange plugged into a blue and yellow room kicks it up a notch.

"Brown" is the new "Black." Just as we have put any accent color with black, now we can do the same with brown. Pair it with pink, red, turquoise, etc. This chocolate trend is a warmer, cozier look. *Send a Smile Any Day!*

Petals 'n Bloomers (936) 825-8577



"Everyone must take time to sit and watch the leaves turn"... Elizabeth Lawrence



Landscapes... Tim Kiphart, Landscape Staff

Our high summer humidity and semiarid weather conditions make for one HOT climate. While the unrelenting, sizzling daytime heat is enough to compromise even the strongest constitutions, it is the elevated night time temperature that makes gardening so difficult here in Texas. Many plants start shutting down around 75 degrees to conserve resources. Ironically, and unfortunately for us, it is the high night-time humidity that buffers this effect by providing just enough moisture to replenish spent flowers. It is dealing with the Texas extremes (climate, soil, water) that make gardening so rewarding.

Moving out of summer and into the fall we are truly blessed to be gardening in Texas. Cooler temperatures renew the mind, spirit, and body of plants and people alike. This second spring beckons us outdoors...into the garden, prairie or woods. Color and texture seems more intense, no doubt a combination of the changing day length and the re-greening of a tired, scorched landscape. There is no place like Texas and successful gardening takes a little practice, some know-how, and a willingness to learn from Mother Nature.

HONEY-DO LIST:

Fertilize—Fall is a great time to fertilize the lawn and garden. Use a high quality organic fertilizer like Gardenville Soil Food, which comes in a granular 6-2-2 or 7-2-2 formulation. Micro-Life is another very good prod-

uct. For those who prefer a liquid formulation, Medina HastaGro or a fish hydrolysate/seaweed combination is very effective. Avoid high nitrogen synthetic sources.

Mulch—If needed, apply a hardwood or native mulch, 2-4" deep. A native shredded or hardwood mulch is superior to pine bark, which has a propensity to float out of beds when it rains. Native ground mulch acts as a natural erosion control blanket by netting together. It also has a greater diversity of materials in it that contribute immensely to soil fertility and plant growth.

Hummingbird Feeders—September is the time Black Chin and Ruby Throat hummingbirds start the trek south, although many folks may have year round residents. Keep hummingbird feeders clean, and **leave the red food dye out.** Mix sugar and water at a 1:4 ratio.

Adjust Irrigation Controllers—Fall rains mean readjusting your irrigation timer. Instead of reprogramming each station, use the water budget function. This allows a reduction in irrigation time as a percentage of the total water programmed for each station. Call Martha's Bloomers' landscaping at if we can be of assistance.

Call (936) 825-7777 ext. 114 or 104.

As a good friend likes to say
"Life is a garden, dig it!"



Plan your Festive Holiday Gala!
Café M. Bloomers offers a variety of special holiday menus, wine and beer.
Contact Pamela Hays to discuss the various menu options available this holiday season.
Call Now — We are already booking!
(936) 870-3277

"The little things? The little moments? They aren't little"... John Zabat-Zinn



Ask Martha & Bloomer...

Dear Martha: With summer coming to an end, when is the best time to water?

Martha here... While summer is almost over, the days can still be very hot. Try to water early for better absorption and for disease prevention.

Dear Bloomer: My yard needs some pizzazz!

Bloomer here... Add some greenery, such as Boston ivy, hardy ferns and crotons. Some will turn with the season, displaying lovely fall colors. Then, tuck a little pumpkin or two in for a finishing touch!

It's Delightful, It's Delovely, It's Delicious...Georgianne Blakely-Zemanek

Extreme makeovers are all the rage...why not a one-day makeover for your home or office!

Georgianne Blakely-Zemanek, of Amazing Spaces, will present **It's Delightful, It's Delovely, It's Delicious** seminar that will demonstrate how you can transform your living or office space, in just one day, while using your existing furniture and accessories. See how to fluff and spruce your space into perfection in an already furnished room, giving it a whole new look!

In addition to making over rooms using existing materials, Georgianne can start from scratch, using her vision for detail to make a single room or your entire home a comfortable surrounding of style, elegance and visual excitement.

Georgianne's demonstration-style presentation will teach you how a few simple steps can turn a typical mantle into a festive showplace for your family's treasured holiday accessories. Find out how to convert a bookcase from a simple storage space to a joyful holiday display.

Georgianne's designs emphasize color and

warmth. Crystal, silver, and accent lighting are used as highlights, while live greenery and plants, such as poinsettias and magnolia blossoms play a major role in holiday presentations.

Georgianne's work will be enhanced by the floral designs of Tricia Barksdale, Petals 'n Bloomers Florist. Holiday decorated tables designed for elaborate dinner parties will be displayed.

Georgianne Blakely-Zemanek is an interior designer licensed through the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners and has been featured on Good Morning Houston.

Join us
Monday, October 4th at 10:30 am
for

It's Delightful, It's Delovely, It's Delicious
decorating seminar and luncheon.

Lunch will be served immediately following.
Cost is \$20 per person. Seating is limited.
Reservations confirmed by credit card required.

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



Tea Time at Café M. Bloomers

Bottom's up...and pinkies up too!
Sunday afternoon tea is back at Café M. Bloomers and it's time to reserve your seat.
Join us one Sunday a month for seasonal themed tea parties
complete with tasty treats.

"For fast acting relief; try slowing down"...Lily Tomlin



Calendar of Events.....

"Illuminating Autumn—Fall Floral & Candle Designs" Seminar — Saturday, Sept. 11 at 11am.
Presented by Tricia Barksdale, Floral Designer, Petals 'n Bloomers Florist.

"Orchid Propagation" Seminar — Saturday, Sept. 18 at 11am. Presented by Dr. Rainer Fink.

"Fall is in the Air" Tea — Sunday, Sept. 19 at 2pm-4pm. \$15.00 pp. Reservations confirmed by credit card required. Door Prizes. Limited seating. Call Café M. Bloomers at 936-870-3277.

"It's Thyme, Etc., for Fall" Seminar — Saturday, Sept. 25 at 11am. Presented by Ann Wheeler, Log House Herb Farm.

"Naturalizing Fall Bulbs for the South" Seminar — Saturday, Oct. 2 at 11am. Presented by Margaret Cherry, Bulb Specialist.

"It's Delightful, It's Delovely, It's Delicious" Decorating Seminar & Luncheon — Monday, Oct. 4 at 10:30 am. Presented by Georgianne Blakely-Zemanek, Amazing Space. \$20.00 pp. Reservations confirmed by credit card required. Limited seating. Call Café M. Bloomers at 936-870-3277.

"Come and Stay a While" (Hummingbirds) Seminar — Saturday, Oct. 9 at 11am. Presented by Darrell Volpert, member Cornell Lab of Ornithology, American Bird Conservancy, National Audubon Society.

"Red Hatters Tea" - Sunday, Oct. 10 at 2 pm. \$15.00 pp. Reservations confirmed by credit card required. Door Prizes. Limited seating. Call Café M. Bloomers at 936-870-3277..

"Everything's Coming Up Pumpkins" Tea — Sunday, Oct. 17 at 2pm-4pm. \$15.00 pp. Reservations confirmed by credit card required. Door Prizes. Limited seating. Call Café M. Bloomers at 936-870-3277.

"Holiday Ikebana Arrangements" Seminar - Saturday, Oct. 23 at 11am. Presented by Nan Mitchell, certified Sogetsu instructor of Ikebana.

"Romancing the Season—Floral Designs from Williamsburg to the Woodlands" Seminar - Saturday, Nov. 6 at 11 am. Presented by Tricia Barksdale, Floral Designer, Petals 'n Bloomers Florist.

"Holiday in the Garden" - Friday, Nov. 19 at 6:30pm. Enjoy our Holiday Garden Gala with hors d'oeuvres, holiday spirits and enchanting live music.

"Glamour in the Garden" Fashion Show and Luncheon — Monday, Nov. 29. Two seatings: 11am & 1:30pm. \$25.00 pp. Reservations confirmed by credit card required. Call Café M. Bloomers at 936-870-3277 for reservation confirmation.

"Orchids for the Holidays" Seminar — Saturday, Dec. 11 at 11am. Presented by Dr. Rainer Fink.

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



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"Naturally," our newsletter is printed on recycled paper which meets or exceeds federal EPA guidelines for recycled paper!

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