

# "Learn Something New Every Day"

"Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life."

Anonymous

## Houston Federation Of Garden Clubs

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April 2010

### Dear Friends:

I hope you will join us for the **Art Show at the April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting**. Many of you will be entering the show and for this we thank you. I can't wait to see what everyone has for display. Christine Morrison has begun to make out the entry cards and has reserved space for each of you. It is not too late to register with her – we have set the deadline as April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Last month our designers really created six interesting designs in the same white containers. Someone mentioned that we ought to do that again next year, or at least something along the same line. What do you think?

Look in this Newsletter for information about the trip to **Bayou Bend and Rienzi** on May 19th. Deana Roberts has arranged private tours, lunch, and a bus. It should be a fun day.

We are drawing to a close the first year of our administration and consider it to have been a successful one. If you have any ideas for next year, don't hesitate to let us know.

**P L E A S E**, someone, **please volunteer** to be **Directory Ads Chairman** for next year.

Jonni Almoney, last year's chairman, has a bulging file of information to help you get started. Also, speaking of Directory ads, anyone who wants to become a **Friends of Houston Federation** Directory supporter please feel free to make a donation to one of our Wildflower categories (listed on page 5 and 22 in the Directory). Your donations help defray the cost of publishing the Directory and will be greatly appreciated.

April and Flower Shows are synonymous to garden clubbers. May your shows be beautiful and plentiful and enjoyed by all who participate and attend.

The May 14th meeting will be right around the corner when we will have award presentations, a design program by S J Derby ("Designs that Communicate), and a potluck luncheon furnished by the Board of Directors'. Plan to attend and say adieu to another garden club year.

Happy gardening and designing.

*Betty*

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| April 9     | HFGC Regular Meeting                   |
| April 23-25 | South Central Region Spring Convention |
| April 25-29 | Texas Garden Clubs Spring Convention   |

Houston Federation of Garden Club Newsletter is published monthly, September through May. **Complimentary** copies are sent to all **HFGC Garden Club and Affiliate Presidents and Treasurers, HFGC Board of Directors, former HFGC Presidents and Individual Members**. **Individual subscriptions** are available for \$10 per year. Send your complete mailing information to HFGC Treasurer.

### IN CASE YOU NEED TO CONTACT US

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Remember - deadline for the May Newsletter is the 15<sup>th</sup> of April.

### A Little FYI

Have you been to the Houston Garden Center recently? You probably noticed the planters of healthy green plants inside the building, on either side of the front door.

You are probably curious to know who maintains the planters. Federation does. Enjoy!

## Horticulture and Spring Renewal

April, 2010

By Jonni Almonee

713- 524-4285

Most of my past Saturday was spent in the back garden, chopping off the dead parts of native plants that froze back, and pulling up and consigning to the compost all those plants that couldn't handle our surprisingly cold winter. The **lantanas** and butterfly weed, *Asclepias species*, are already showing new growth around the base of the plants, as is the *Salvia leucantha*, and the *Monarda 'Peter's purple'* has spread rather alarmingly to at least twice the area it occupied last year. That will bear watching, but fortunately it seems like it can be easily pulled out where I don't want it.

The *Agastache 'Blue Fortune'* and *'Acapulco'* are up about five inches high and have a healthy crop of seedlings sprouting in the soil around the mother plants. These are rather small perennials that we included in the garden for the first time last spring, and they are delightful little plants. Agastaches are native perennials, stay under two feet high, and are very fragrant, both the leaves and the flowers. Agastache is in the mint family, and the bees are drawn to it the minute it starts blooming. Hummingbirds and butterflies enjoy it, too. The blooms of cultivar *'Blue Fortune'* appear on upright spikes and are a pleasing bluish purple; *'Acapulco'* is the shorter of the two types, usually about a foot tall, and its bloom spikes have pink and orange flowers. Ours are planted in partial shade, but the growing guide says they can handle sun. I have a feeling that they might grow a bit taller with more light, but they stayed nicely compact with prolific bloom spikes in the conditions they had in our garden. They can be easily propagated from seed or the clumps can be divided as they mature and spread.

As to the frozen plants that bit the dust: most of them weren't natives. I have had a love affair with pentas for years because they are easy to grow, bloom nicely, and the solid red variety attracts hummingbirds. Some of the ones that met their doom in the cold were six years old; that's how long it's been since the inner city had an actual freeze. If I am going to practice what I have been preaching to you all year, I am going to have to replace those pentas with something native. So now I am on the lookout for native blooming shrubs, about two to three feet high, that can handle some shade and are magnets for hummingbirds and insects. Evergreen varieties would be my first choice, so that the garden doesn't look too naked in the winter – right now the front and back gardens have woefully large empty patches.

The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center has a wonderful website, [wildflower.org](http://wildflower.org), which I have been using as a resource for plant identification and information since I started writing this column last fall. It has a database with information on every native plant in Texas, with photos as well as descriptions of plants' needs and preferences. There is an option for selecting recommended plants in a specific area, as well as a list of local suppliers for the plant you choose. The choices get a little overwhelming, so I think that my solution is going to be to head to a native plant nursery (there are several really good ones in our area) and see what is available immediately that will fit in my garden scheme.

There are some non-native plants that did live to fight another year in the Almonee gardens. Included among these are three species of gingers: the culinary variety, *Zingiber officinale*, the highly fragrant butterfly ginger, *Hedychium coronarium*, and false cardamom ginger, *Alpinia nutens*, all of which are sprouting back up. We rarely cook with the culinary ginger, but it is fun to know that we can grow it in the herb bed. The other two fill a need for different leaf shapes and quick dense filler, and as our garden matures will probably be replaced with yet more native plants. Gardening is not for impatient types, and half the fun is in the trial-and-error search for compatible, workable plant species in your own space.

[All information pertaining to native plants came from the website [wildflowers.org](http://wildflowers.org) or from my experience, and the names of gingers came from typing "gingers" into the Google search.]

**HOSTESS REMINDER**

APRIL 9, 2010 HFGC Meeting

**Carmen Oliver****Zone 1 Counselor****713-465-4649**

Blue Triangle Garden Club  
 Bluebonnet Garden Club  
 Far Corners Garden Study Group  
 Houstonia Garden Club  
 Mangum Manor Garden Club  
 Southampton Garden Club  
 United Garden Club  
 Greater Hou. Chrysanthemum Society  
 Houston Orchid Society  
 Houston Rose Society  
 Men's Garden Club of Houston

**BOUQUETTES GARDEN CLUB  
 and  
 KOLTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
 STUDENTS**

*Present**A Small Standard Flower Show**"A World of Gardening"**Friday, April 16, 2010**1:30 to 3:30**at***Kolter Elementary School**

9710 Runnymede Houston, TX 77096

This event will introduce you to youth gardeners at Kolter and the youths to the world of the Flower Show. Children from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grades will enter designs and horticulture.

**Open to the Public****No Admission Charge****ROSES ROCK**

**A Gardening Program Just For Kids  
 Presented by**

**Houston Rose Society**

**When: Thursday, April 8, 2010 from  
 7:00 to 7:30**

*ROSES ROCK is a program designed just for kids and features Ivy Keen, a student from Bellaire. Ivy's program demonstrates how children can create their own roses. Each child that attends will experience a fun program presented by Mary Fulgham, Ivy Keen's mom. There is no charge to attend and all children are welcome.*

**For more information contact  
 Mary Bahn 713-623-0200 or Gaye  
 Hammond, 713-292-2760 or  
 (gayeh@lpm-triallaw.com)**

**GardenScapes**

The Kingwood Garden club will welcome Spring with a public tour of four private gardens of Kingwood.

The Event is scheduled for  
 Friday, April 23, 10 am to 4 pm  
 Saturday, April 24 and Sunday,  
 April 25 from 12 noon to 4 pm

**The ticket price is \$8.00 pre-tour and  
 \$10.00 at sites. For more information  
 contact Ann Korenek 281-358-8386 or  
 www.kingwoodgardenclub.org**

**Attention Speakers**

Preparations for the 2010-2011 Federation Directory are under way. If you are currently listed as a Speaker in the Directory, pages 16-20, please verify that the information for you is correct. If changes are needed, including additions or deletions, please notify me. If you would like to ADD YOUR NAME to the Speakers' List, that would top my list of good news! Please let me hear from you. Jerry Reid, Speakers Chairman, 6214 Birdwell Road, Houston, TX 77074-7526, (713) 774-0809.

**Friendswood's Heritage Gardeners  
 Annual Garden Tour**

*"Through The Garden Gate"*

April 24, 2010 – 10-4 p.m.

April 25, 2010 – 1-5 p.m.

*For tickets call  
 281-992-4438*

**FAR CORNERS GARDEN STUDY  
 CLUB**

**A Standard Flower Show**

**"Imagination + Exploration =  
 Visualization"**

**Tuesday, April 13, 2010****12:30 PM – 3:00 PM****at****Houston Civic Garden Center****1500 Hermann Drive****No Admission Charge**

**Due to space limitations not all  
 articles can be printed in their entirety.**

**HOUSTON URBAN GARDENERS**

This newly formed club meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month at the Houston Garden Center, 6:30 p.m. Their beautiful and informative website is: [www.houstonurbangardeners.org](http://www.houstonurbangardeners.org)

**Attention All Club  
 Presidents/Treasurers  
 Rosters are Due May 15**

By now the Club Treasurer should have received the club's roster for updating for the 2010-2011 Houston Federation Directory. The updated roster is to be returned by May 15 to Directory Roster Chair, Arlene Skaggs. 10706 Fawnview Dr; Houston, TX 77070-3306

Dues payment should be sent to the Federation Treasurer - **do not include with rosters**. Please check to be sure this is on your club's to-do list!!

**THE WOODLANDS  
 GARDEN CLUB PRESENTS**

**"My Green Garden"**

"Home to Favorite Plants and Tiny  
 Creatures"

A Standard Flower Show

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

From 1:00 to 4:00 at

**THE FORUM**

5055 West Panther Creek Dr.

The Woodlands, Texas

**(Open to the public, Admission Free)**

**Society For the Advancement of  
 Floral Designs**

SAFD offers scholarships to those wanting to further their education in the fields of horticulture, floriculture or agriculture. Scholarships are available for high school seniors and adults that have a passion for flowers. For more information, please visit any of these websites:

[www.safdhouston.org](http://www.safdhouston.org);[www.tsfa.org/scholarships](http://www.tsfa.org/scholarships); or[www.alliedfloristsofhouston.org](http://www.alliedfloristsofhouston.org). or

Scholarship Chairman, Eileen Collins, at  
 281-379-2426 or send an e-mail to  
[epcollins150@gmail.com](mailto:epcollins150@gmail.com). More

information and scholarship applications will be available at the next meeting on Tuesday, April 13, at the Cypress Creek Christian Community Center, located at 6823 Cypresswood Dr., Spring, 77379.

Presentation at 7:00 p.m. Refreshments 6:30

HFGC meets on the second Friday of each month (Sept. – May).

Program at 10:30 A.M. followed by a short business meeting. Refreshments from 9:30 A.M. to 10:30 A.M.

Houston Civic Garden Center; 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004

**April 12, 2010  
Houston Federation Meeting**

**The meeting will begin at 10:30.**

**Program: "The Nature of Art: A Show"**

This show will feature Federation talent. On exhibit will be paintings, watercolors, sculptures, photography, yard art and much more. There is no limit to the amount of talent in our midst.

**Ways & Means:**

- Plant Sale – Bring plants for sales table

**Horticulture Exhibit:** Bring a prized specimen from your garden.

**Design Exhibits** – "Construction Conveyed" – by Betty Jean Collier, Chairman

**Houston Federation Trip  
To  
Bayou Bend and Rienzi  
Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>  
Tour of Houses and Gardens  
Plus  
Lunch at Ousie's Table  
Leave Garden Center  
9:30 AM  
Return at 4:30 PM  
Cost is \$75**

**This will be a fun event for all attendees. It will be an opportunity to see beautiful gardens and houses as well as a chance to relax with friends and fellow gardeners. Better hurry and sign up soon. Spaces will fill quickly.**