

# "Learn Something New Every Day"

"Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it."  
Confucius

## Houston Federation Of Garden Clubs

Volume 63, No. 9

www.houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

May 2010

### Dear Friends:

We are about to put a wrap on another garden club year. May 14<sup>th</sup>, the final meeting of the year, will find Federation offering **awards**, enjoying **SJ Derby's design program "Designs that Communicate"**, and sharing a **covered dish luncheon**. Bring a dish to pass and the Board of Directors will provide the rest. This will be a fine way to pat ourselves on the back for a very successful year.

**Mickey Sanders** is primed to offer rewards for anyone smart enough to guess what her common thought has been when she presents her "**Thought for the Day**" each month. I have suggested she give us some clues in this Newsletter, but she is holding fast against giving us any help. HELP!!!! You ought to come next month just to find out what in the world she has been trying to tell us.

Our **April meeting and program was OUTSTANDING!!!! WE HAVE TALENT!!!!** Thank each of you for making the effort to share your talents with the rest of us. So many paintings and watercolors (yes Ginny Russell we do know there is a difference between the two!), quilts, handwork of all kinds, containers, bowling balls (I kid you not!), handmade dresses, photographs extraordinaire, and many, many other wonderful objects. A huge thank you goes to **Christine Morrison** who organized the show – she is truly a one-woman managerial titan!! Remember, she had to get to the airport for a trip to Scotland that afternoon. What a day!!!

**ATTENTION ALL BOARD MEMBERS:** There will be an important board meeting on **Monday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 1:30** (note the time change). Please plan to attend and submit a final report of your activities for this year and tentative plans for next year.

We will have one more Newsletter in June to help you with information for your yearbooks. Christine Morrison has a most unusual program line-up for next year – I can't wait for September. Actually, I can wait. We all deserve a summer off, right?

See you on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

*Betty*

P.S. Come tour Bayou Bend and Rienzi with us on May 19<sup>th</sup>.



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS



May 10	HFGC Board of Directors Meeting (Note: Board Meeting is 1:30)
May 14	HFGC Regular Meeting
May 19	HFGC Trip (Bayou Bend & Rienzi)

### How To Get The Newsletter

Houston Federation of Garden Club Newsletter is published monthly, September through May. Complimentary copies are sent to all HFGC Garden Club 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.

### Thank You

A huge "thank you" to all who have served on the HFGC Board of Directors and for all the Committee Chairpersons who have worked tirelessly throughout the 2009-2010 garden club year. And certainly a genuine "thank you" goes to all members who have pitched in whenever and wherever they were asked to. Great Job!

## Horticulture and Invasive Plants

May, 2010

By Jonni Almoney  
713- 524-4285

Every spring I spend hours in the flowerbeds, pulling out unwanted seedlings. The most common offenders are Chinese tallow, *Sapium sebiferum*, and Golden rain tree, *Koelreuteria paniculata*, neither of which live in our garden but are all over the neighborhood. Neither of these is a naturally occurring Texas specimen, and it made me wonder about non-native species and the effect that alien plant forms have on our ecology. Not surprisingly, there is an abundance of information on the Internet that can be unearthed by very little probing. Some of the plants on the list as “particularly worrisome” are commonly used in landscaping, and it frankly never struck me that they were problematical.

For instance, pyracantha and nandina (the berrying varieties) are both on the list published by the City of Austin as “invasive plants to avoid”. They look harmless enough, and probably many of you reading this have one or both of them growing in your home garden. Our garden had nandina, a whole hedge of it, and we removed it when the house and deck were remodeled – because it no longer fit our scheme, not for any ecologically correct reason. The Austin list is composed of species that “have already invaded preserves and greenbelts in Austin”. They out-compete local native species, spreading from planted landscapes into the wild. In the case of these two, foraging fruit-eating birds have served as the agents who moved them from gardens to wild spaces, but others travel by runners, rhizomes, spores, and stems, through the air and floating down streams.

Before we go any further, let me stress that most exotic species do not cause any harm to our environment. In fact, most introduced species do not survive outside of carefully controlled conditions, and only about 15% of those become invasive. The ones that do survive, however, can be a real pain.

Here’s a definition from the Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Council (TIPPC):: “An ‘invasive species’ is defined as a species that is non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health”. If you wonder what difference this might make to you, think about this: “Everyone in Texas should care because unless we can reduce or stop their spread, invasive species will continue to require significant dollars to treat, control and to remedy damage that is caused to public resources.”

The Austin website and also the TIPPC site have an extensive list of invasive plants, some of which won’t surprise you a bit, but others just might be a shock. For instance, ligustrum, that stalwart of landscapers throughout the 1960’s and 1970’s, is a significant problem. The local Audubon Society has devoted considerable expense and countless volunteer hours over the past ten years to removing *Ligustrum sinense*, which they mostly call by the common name “privet”, from the sanctuaries along the Texas Gulf Coast. Another major headache in the coastal sanctuaries is Japanese honeysuckle, *Lonicera japonica*. Once it is established, honeysuckle twines itself around everything in its path, choking out native plants and resisting attempts at removal. It is perennial and has rhizomes, so it persists year after year, and attempts to pull it out often leave behind enough roots for starting over a new set of plants.

There are native honeysuckles that are as attractive as the invasive ones, and they feed our native wildlife. Privet can be replaced with wax myrtles or viburnums – both of which are evergreen and attractive as well as useful to native birds and insects. If you want fall color in your garden, instead of Chinese tallow, think about using Bigtooth maple, a small native tree that colors up in cooler weather. There are many native hollies that can be used to supply a splash of red in the landscape rather than using pyracantha or nandina. Before you introduce a new plant into your garden, please consider what it might be capable of if it gets loose.

[Information for this article came from the Austin City website, from the Texas Invasive Plant and Pest Council, and from the Houston Audubon Society.]

### TOUR TO BAYOU BEND AND RIENZI HOUSES AND GARDENS

**May 19, 2010**

Depart HGC parking lot at 9:30 a.m. Come on and join your garden club friends for a special guided tour of **Bayou Bend, Renzi Houses and Gardens.**

**Lunch at Backstreet Café**

**Everything included for \$75.**

Make checks payable to Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. Mail check by April 30 to:  
Deana Roberts, 9306 Bonhomme Road, Houston, TX 77074-6616.

### BROMELIAD SHOW AND SALE

The Bromeliad Society/Houston, Inc. will hold their annual plant show and sale on May 14 -16, at Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens (22306 Aldine-Westfield Road). Bromeliad growers will be on hand during sale hours to answer questions.

#### SHOW HOURS

Saturday, May 15, 2 am - 5 p.m.

Sunday, May 16, 11 am - 4 p.m.

#### SALE HOURS

Friday, May 14, Noon - 5 p.m.

Saturday, May 15, 9 - 5 p.m.

Sunday, May 16, 11 - 4 p.m.

Website [bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)  
Charlien Rose (713)-686-9969

### OPEN GARDEN DAY LILY FESTIVAL

**May 16, 2010, Sunday,**

**8:00 AM-6:00 PM**

Harvey and Nell Shimek

3122 County Road 237

Alvin, TX 77511-8690

281-331-4395

[neshimek@comcast.net](mailto:neshimek@comcast.net)

<http://www.hal-pc.org/~neshimek/>

### HERB DAY SOMPOSIUM

The South Texas Unit's annual Herb Day Symposium is coming up on Saturday, April 24. Our theme this year is *Tales of Texas Herbs*. You may have already gotten a registration flyer in the mail. If not, or if you'd like a copy to share, you can view the information and download a copy of the brochure online on our Unit website at [www.herbsociety-stu.org](http://www.herbsociety-stu.org). Herb Day is always a lovely day. It's often a sell-out event; so if you'd like to attend, reserve your spot now. Attendance is by pre-paid registration only. Don't wait.

Benée Curtis  
South Texas Unit, The HAS

### HOUSTON'S ANNUAL POND TOUR

**June 5 & 6**

Sponsored by the Houston Pond Society and the Lone Star Koi Club, this self-guided tour is spread over the greater Houston area, and spans two days, with half the ponds open only on Saturday and half open only on Sunday. Hours are from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. A \$10 ticket is good for both days, and can be purchased in advance at Nelson Water Gardens in Katy <http://nelsonwatergardens.com/>, or at any of the tour homes on the day of the tour. Go to [www.houstonpondsociety.org](http://www.houstonpondsociety.org) or [www.lonestarkoi.com](http://www.lonestarkoi.com) to find the home nearest to you, and plan your route. Tickets include a brochure with a brief description of each pond, a map, and detailed driving directions to each home. For more information, call Dan Cook, pond tour chairman, at 713-822-5515, or [dcook1830@aol.com](mailto:dcook1830@aol.com)

**Last Newsletter....** for a while. A Newsletter will be mailed to Club Presidents, Club Treasurers and HFGC Board of Directors in late July. Take time off, relax and "Learn Something New Every Day".



### Gentle Reminders

**Dues payment** should be mailed to Federation Treasurer, Bunnye Baldwin - 503 Shadowbend Ave; Friendswood, TX 77546-3846

**Please remember** – If your address, phone number, zip code or email address has changed since the last HFGC Directory, please let the Membership Chairman, Mary Kay Ellis, [mkdesigns@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mkdesigns@sbcglobal.net) (281-367-0209) or myself [ettacg@msn.com](mailto:ettacg@msn.com) (281-328-1330) know. Daphne Light is already getting information together for the Directory and her email is [dlight1215@aol.com](mailto:dlight1215@aol.com) so you can send information to her also but **please** cc all three of us. Thanks!

*Houston Federation of Garden Clubs Newsletter*

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

**May 14, 2010**

**Houston Federation Meeting**

The meeting will begin at 10:30.

**Program: "Designs That Communicate"**

**Speaker: SJ Derby**

**Ms. Derby is involved with the Kerr Arts & Cultural Center in the Texas Hill Country. Because her designs can be on view for a month or so they may emphasize the sculptural form rather than flowers.**

**Garden Club Luncheon**

**May 14<sup>th</sup>**

Please bring a covered dish of food to share. The Board of Directors will provide everything else.

**Ways & Means**

- Plant Sale
- Things & Such
- Horticulture Exhibits
- Drawing Items

**Awards will be given by Daphne Light.**

