



Reindeer in the snow at the entrance to LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden.

Reflections From the Chair

Lorice Say
Chair, Friends of LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens
at Burden



As our short winter season becomes apparent and cold weather approaches here in the costal South, we shift gears in our gardens. We don't need to batten down the hatches like those in the northern states, but we do have our own seasonal routines, like holding back fertilizer and heavily mulching tender perennials. Although our landscapes probably would not suffer severely if we neglected to do those winterizing tasks, routines and habits are good practices to establish. They bring order to our lives and help us keep track of the passage of yearly seasons.

Unlike many of our northern neighbors, we are so fortunate to have an outdoor winter growing season, and we can have fall gardens and winter gardens through the short winter months before turning our thoughts to spring plantings, which are two to three months earlier than planting zones adjacent to ours.

I encourage you to come out and enjoy the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden and its winter landscape. You will find leafless trees and even warm — not hot for a little while — weather. Activities like Arbor Day on January 19 can be a fun and educational experience for families. We may not have the winter sports of the north, but we can embrace the nippy air and changing landscape. Include the Botanic Gardens in your hiking and bird-watching leisure activities without traveling very far. Consider spending a wonderful Southern winter day with family and friends enjoying nature right here in the city. ■



Volunteers at the 2018 Poinsettia Show and Sale.

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The newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Friends of LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden, which is part of Burden Museum & Gardens.

DiscoverBurden.com

4560 Essen Lane
Baton Rouge, LA 70809



Docents at fall Trees & Trails training.

Trees & Trails and More

By Sarah Rayner

Educator Coordinator

This year is rapidly coming to a close. The Botanic Gardens for so many of us “is our little piece of heaven,” as Jeff Kuehny had described in a meeting. There is so much beauty here! The trails are peaceful and serene and always inviting. The leaves are beginning to fall, and there is a crispness in the air. In nature there is always that promise of renewal in the spring.

We had our fall orientation for Trees & Trails volunteer docents on September 19. It was a wonderful time to come together and to welcome our new docents: Nancy Kora, Cynthia Levy, Phyllis Pendergrass, Barbara Williams and Gaynelle Wolff. Rainy weather and Corn Maze Fridays limited the number of field trips in October, but we had three field trips in November. Trees & Trails field trips will resume the second week in March and continue until the first week of May. There are four field trip reservations already for March. If you would like to volunteer as a docent for our Trees & Trails field trips, please contact me at srayner@agcenter.lsu.edu or 225-763-3990 ext. 3.

Our Corn Maze Fridays were truly “amazing!” A total of 987 students from 17 area schools participated in Corn

Maze Fridays. Students had a wonderful time navigating the maze, decorating pumpkins, taking a hayride to the satsuma orchard to pick satsumas, climbing haystack mountain and so much more! We added three interactive educational activities on the history, structure and growth of corn. They were well attended on both Corn Maze Fridays and Saturdays.

So much went into making Corn Maze such a great success. Many of our Trees & Trails docents volunteered tirelessly to work concessions, admissions and all the games, including the slingshot. They also taught educational programs and pumpkin decorating and directed traffic. Special thanks go to Kerry Hawkins, Leo Broders, Jenny Sutcliffe, Nancy Jurasinski, Ken Bosso, Mary Tharp, Missy Jones, Kitty Bull, Katheen Meares, Janie Braud, Diana Wells and Brenda Baumgardner. Also, so many thanks to the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens staff as well as Aline Creed, Barbara Quirk, Elena Fennell and other volunteers from our Friends group and the community.

We continue to grow our youth education programs. In January, we will have a second student intern added to our Learning by Leading internship program who will develop adventures in the woodlands.

My warmest wishes go out to you and your families this holiday season and for a wonderful year ahead! ■

Outdoor Classroom for Microbiology Students

By Dr. Gary King and Ginger Brininstool

LSU undergraduates who enroll in General Microbiology, BIOL 2051, are helping to understand the distribution and diversity of microbes in the greater Baton Rouge area. The goals of this effort are to introduce students to contemporary research methods that address basic questions about urban environments in the local community and to develop maps of microbes across the Baton Rouge landscape.

Students collect samples from a wide range of sites, including BREC parks, wastewater treatment plants, lawns, the LSU campus, and various bayous and the LSU lakes. Students extract genomic DNA from the microbes in their samples and then submit the DNA for a sequencing analysis that generates a molecular “name tag” for more than 100,000 different types of microbes. Students then summarize the results using a variety of statistical and graphical approaches.

At the end of October, a group of students from LSU and their advisers visited the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden. They collected soil samples from two plots cultivated with soybeans and from a contiguous uncultivated site with a grass cover. In addition, they collected sediment from the tupelo swamp, soil from a site with pine trees and an open



General microbiology students Kevin Sun and Emily Huynh (left and right) and assisting biology teacher at Lee High School Dr. Himanshu Raje collect soil samples for determining microbe diversity at the Botanic Gardens at Burden.

understory, and from two ant mounds and surrounding soils. Genomic DNA has been extracted. Stay tuned for the sequence results and analysis in the next newsletter. The results will be compared with other sites in Baton Rouge to further expand the geographic range of the study.

Dr. Gary King is a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at LSU, and Ginger Brininstool is an instructor in the department. ■

Thank You for Your Service

It is exciting to announce that three new members were elected to join the all-volunteer board of Friends of LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden. Stepping up to plate are Ken Bosso, Julie McCarthy and Janie Braud. They are all familiar faces, having actively participated in many different areas in the gardens. Each brings a treasure trove of knowledge and experience — especially concerning volunteering — to the organization.

It is a working board. Not only do board members commit to a three-year term, which often leads to a second term and a total six-year stint, but they also serve as important leaders chairing the fundraisers and the standing committees. They plan. They organize. They

teach. They are quartermasters and admissions takers. They are road warriors crossing the bridge and gator drivers traversing the trails. They are the information technology team and the financial advisors. They are the welcome committee and the band leaders making volunteering so satisfying and fundraising successful.

So, a huge thank you to outgoing board members Barbara Quirk, Martha Rome, Diana Wells, John McCarthy and Mitzi Miller! My, oh, my, how you have helped the gardens grow. Your dedication and enthusiasm, helping hands, wise advice and generous gifts of your time and talents are greatly appreciated. ■

Corn Maze 2018

The Corn Maze at Burden is the Friends' most successful fundraiser. The Friends of LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens and the staff would like to thank the 300-plus other volunteers who helped provide an outdoor agricultural experience to over 10,000 attendees. More than 50 percent of the world's population lives in cities, and most consumers source their food from supermarkets, food courts, restaurants and shops. The Corn Maze provides an immersive experience in agriculture and food literacy that we hope will capture the minds and imaginations of urban populations and grow a new generation of curious agriculture ambassadors. Along with the immersive experience, the funds raised from this event help support the Botanic Gardens' educational programs, specialty gardens and woodlands for the benefit of our community and all who visit the Botanic Gardens at Burden. ■



Costumed for the Night Maze.



Pumpkin power to the third degree.



Youngest Corn Maze volunteers Gianna and Adrianna Fennell.

Greetings From StoryTime

By Erin Blanchard

LSU Student Intern, StoryTime in the Garden

StoryTime in the Garden is a program designed to promote early literacy development through storytelling and imagination. StoryTime programs include imagination-themed storybooks and various hands-on crafts. These crafts can range from puppets to color sheets, but all will target skills, such as psycho-motor development, imagination, making predictions about the story, or reading and then reading again. All these skills are things that parents can do at home with the child.

The program is designed for children ages 3 to 8, but all are welcome. The program meets one Saturday a month from September through April. Readings begin at 9 a.m. and end at noon, with the last reading at 11:30 a.m. We are joined by the Junior League of Baton Rouge, an organization committed to promoting volunteerism and improvement of the community, to bring the importance of healthy eating into the program as well. I assist in choosing the themes, books and crafts, along with helping prepare for the StoryTime programs.

Also in the works is our StoryWalk, an innovative and delightful way for children — and adults — to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time. Pages from a children's book are displayed throughout the outdoor path. As you stroll down the trail, you're directed to the next page in the story. There will be interactive signs as you move through the path, along with author and illustrator information. The StoryWalk project is being made possible through a generous donation from the Junior League. ■



Intern Erin Blanchard reading for StoryTime.

Arbor Day

at Burden

January 19
9 a.m. - 1p.m.
LSU AgCenter
Botanic Gardens

- Family Tree Planting
- Scavenger Hunt
- StoryTime and Activities
- Children's Tree Climbing
- Visit With Smokey Bear
- Bonfire, Hayrides
- And More ...

LSU AgCenter
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FREE FAMILY FUN

Concessions will be available for purchase.

LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden · Burden Museum & Gardens
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Camellia Show & Sale

Feb. 9 · 2 to 4 p.m.
Feb. 10 · 10 a.m. - 3p.m.

The Baton Rouge Camellia Society will conduct their annual Camellia Show at the LSU Rural Life Museum. It features a juried camellia show with many plants for sale from the expansive camellia collection in the Botanic Gardens. The show is free and open to the public.

LSU Rural Life Museum at Burden · 4560 Essen Lane · Baton Rouge

Reflections in the Garden 2019 Monthly Educational Series

Noon-1 p.m., Lone Burden Conference Center
Admission is \$10 per person (free for Friends members).
Everyone is welcome! Bring a lunch if you like. Drinks provided.



Arrangements by John Grady Burns, Reflections 2018.



Demo by Mary Johnston of Merry Florals, Reflections 2018.

Jan. 7 - "Thirty Years of Growth: The Impact of Baton Rouge Green"

Sage Foley, Executive Director, Baton Rouge Green

Feb. 4 - "Color in the Garden"

Cynthia Cash, Landscape Architect

March 4 - "Intense Vegetable Gardening"

Hillar Moore, East Baton Rouge District Attorney

Dr. Kiki Fontenot, Assistant Professor, LSU AgCenter

April 1 - "The New World of Succulents"

Rozlan Fransen, Owner, Baton Rouge Succulent Company

May 6 - "Friendship Through Flowers: East Meets West"

Terri Lamb, President, Ikebana International Baton Rouge Chapter

June 3 - "The Wide World of Wild and Wonderful Wildflowers"

Dr. Charles Allen, Professor, University of Louisiana Monroe (retired)

July 1 - "Gardening for Butterflies and Other Pollinators and Making a Difference as a Citizen Scientist"

Ken Bosso, Master Naturalist

Sarah Rayner, Youth Education Coordinator, LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden

Aug. 5 - "Gingers: Foliage, Fragrance and Flowers"

Tim Chapman, Owner, Gingerwood Nursery

Sept. 9 - "Meditation and Wellness Gardens"

Wanda Chase, Landscape Architect, Imahara's

Oct. 7 - "Creative Cooking Demonstrations"

Louisiana Culinary Institute Instructors and Students

Nov. 4 - "Winter Hummingbirds"

Jane Patterson, President, Baton Rouge Audubon Society

Dec. 2 - "Place, Memory, and Garden-Making at Le Petit Versailles and Rowan Oak"

Kevin Risk, Associate Professor, Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture, LSU



Holiday Cactus

By Lee Rouse

Extension Agent

Holiday cactuses, both Thanksgiving and Christmas cactuses, are very popular plants this time of year. Christmas cactuses are often given as a present and used for decorating in the home.

For most people the holiday cactus does not fit the typical idea of what a cactus should look like, probably because the plant originated in the rainforest of Brazil — not in arid desert regions.

These plants are true epiphytes, meaning they are not found in soils, but are perched in trees with their roots in the pockets of decaying organic matter lodged in the cavities. This explains much about how we need to care for these plants to keep them healthy.

Two different species constitute what we refer to as the holiday cactus. The *Schlumbergera truncata*, considered to be the Thanksgiving cactus, and the *Schlumbergera russelliana*, the Christmas cactus, are the original species, but many breeders have begun to hybridize the two. The Thanksgiving cactus is distinguished by its sharp teeth-like edges on the flat stem joints, while the Christmas cactus is characterized by softer, rounded scallops on the edges of its flat stems.

A Christmas cactus can easily be purchased in bloom during the holiday season. These plants can be found at local garden centers, grocery stores, drug stores and gift shops. The flower color options are nearly endless and include red, magenta, pink, rose, lavender, white, salmon, pale gold and orange. It is normal for the plant to begin to rapidly drop flower buds soon after bringing it into the home. This is more common if the plant was growing outside at the nursery and was then brought indoors.

Give this plant as much light as you can if you want to grow it indoors. Placing it on a window sill or near a bright window will give ample light to your holiday cactus. Watering an indoor plant can be a bit trickier than your garden plants but, generally, when the soil surface is dry, this means it's time to water again. Remember, these holiday cactuses are not desert cactuses. If the plant is allowed to dry out too much, this will also increase the flower drop.

As spring approaches and the danger of a frost has passed, you may consider taking your holiday cactus outside into the garden or on the patio. This plant is going to prefer growing



in full to partial shade. Place your holiday cactus in an area where it will receive some morning sun with shade for the remainder of the day.

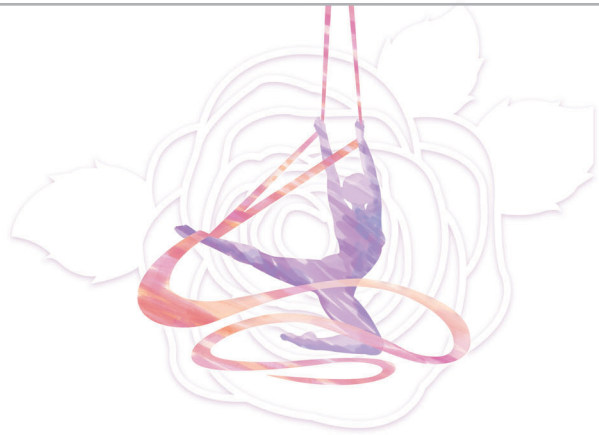
Getting your holiday cactus to bloom again next year is very simple. This plant is triggered to bloom by long nights or by receiving more than 12 hours of nighttime and temperatures below 65 degrees. This is easily achieved by leaving or placing your plant outside in late September. This will give the plant the temperature as well as the long nights needed to rebloom. Keep the plant away from a porch light or streetlight, which could interrupt flower initiation. ■

Byzantine Icon Workshop: St. Therese of Lisieux (The Little Flower)

The St. Therese workshop scheduled for Feb. 11-15 has been filled. There are 24 participants and two people on the waiting list. The next workshop will be held July 22-26 with an intermediate level subject that has yet to be determined. If you are interested, please contact Diana Wells at dianawells1548@gmail.com for more information.



Dr. Luke Laborde's Renewable Natural Resources class, Introduction to Natural Resource Policy, assisted in installing the frames for the StoryWalk in the Burden Woods. From left to right, Jacob Meyer, Jenna Cheramie, Asia Taienao and Braian Tome.



Wine & Roses

We appreciate the generosity of our supporters:

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SAVE THE DATE



An educational program of the LSU AgCenter

Master Gardeners

Plant Sale

Saturday, March 23

8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden
4560 Essen Lane . Baton Rouge



Don't guess. Soil test!

With help from the LSU AgCenter Soil Testing and Plant Analysis Lab

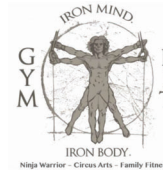


LSUAgCenter.com/SoilTest

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Upcoming Events at LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden			
January 2019			
Jan. 7	Noon-1 p.m.	Friends of LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden	Reflections in the Garden — "Thirty Years of Growth: The Impact of Baton Rouge Green," Sage Foley, executive director Baton Rouge Green.
Jan. 8	2 p.m.	East Baton Rouge Master Gardeners	Monthly meeting — Dr. Sara Shields, Louisiana Master Gardener State Coordinator.
Jan. 16	7:00 p.m.	Baton Rouge Orchid Society	Monthly meeting.
Jan. 19	9 a.m.-1 p.m.	Arbor Day	Plant trees in the Burden Woods to celebrate Arbor Day in Louisiana, plus children's tree climbing, Smokey Bear, hay rides and scavenger hunt.
Jan. 19	9 a.m.-noon, every 30 mins.	Arbor Day StoryTime in the Garden	Storybook reading and imagination-themed activities at Arbor Day. Ages 3-8.
Jan. 24	6:30 p.m.	Baton Rouge Unit of the Herb Society of America	Monthly meeting — "Overview of National Consortial Herbs and Health Study," Dr. Elizabeth Floyd, scientist, Pennington Biomedical Research Center.
February 2019			
Feb. 4	Noon-1 p.m.	Friends of LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden	Reflections in the Garden — "Color in the Garden," Cynthia Cash, landscape architect.
Feb. 5	2 p.m.	East Baton Rouge Master Gardeners	Monthly meeting. Trip to Fullness Farms with Grant Guidroz.
Feb. 9 Feb. 10	1-4:30 p.m. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.	Baton Rouge Camellia Society Show and Sale	Annual Camellia Show and Sale featuring award winners from around the state. Members provide planting and management advise. Held at Rural Life Museum.
Feb. 11-15	9 a.m.-4 p.m.	Byzantine Icon Workshop	Create an icon using gold leaf and paint. A five-day retreat with lunch included. \$350. Limited enrollment of 20. SOLD OUT.
Feb. 16	9 a.m.-noon, every 30 mins.	StoryTime in the Garden	Storybook reading and imagination-themed activities in the garden. Ages 3 - 8.
Feb. 20	7:00 p.m.	Baton Rouge Orchid Society	Monthly meeting.
Feb. 23	9 a.m.-noon	Baton Rouge Camellia Society	Workshop on grafting camellias.
Feb. 23	7 a.m.-2 p.m.	Herb Day	Herb Day at Burden. Plant sales, herbal classes, family activities, music, food, displays, demos and vendors.
Feb. 28	6:30 p.m.	Baton Rouge Unit of the Herb Society of America	Monthly meeting — "Wholistic Veterinary Practice," Dr. Larry McCaskill, a veterinarian.
March 2019			
Mar. 4	Noon-1 p.m.	Friends of LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden	Reflections in the Garden — "Intense Vegetable Gardening," Hillar Moore, East Baton Rouge district attorney and Dr. Kiki Fontenot, assistant professor, LSU AgCenter.
Mar. 5	6 p.m.	East Baton Rouge Master Gardeners	Monthly meeting; Water Quality and Impact on Your Garden, Cindy Moran.
Mar. 17	1-3 p.m.	Baton Rouge Camellia Society Annual Meeting	Annual business meeting and elections of officers.
Mar. 20	7:00 p.m.	Baton Rouge Orchid Society	Monthly meeting.
Mar. 23	8 a.m.-2 p.m.	Master Gardener Plant Sale	Annual plant sale. Over 5,000 homegrown perennials (and a few annuals) specifically selected by the Master Gardeners for success in your garden!
Mar. 28	6:30 p.m.	Baton Rouge Unit of the Herb Society of America	Monthly meeting — "Using Herbs in Mideastern Cooking," a Culinary Extravaganza with Ruby Homayssi and Ruth Harb.