

The Bloomin' News

October, 2001

Les Leckron, Chairman

Don Crocker, Editor

Chairman's Message

By Les Leckron

Here we are with another Fall Tree and Plant Sale! I don't know about the rest of the Men's Garden Club members, but these semi-annual sales seem to be getting closer together. We did the right thing after the Spring Sale by securing our fearless leader for the Fall Sale, (thanks Leland!) and started the planning right away. I'm sure we will have a great sale. Thanks to of all the Men's Club members for your hard work, needed to continuously maintain the Tree Farm and pull together these big Tree & Plant Sales. (Ed. Note: We know this "Thanks" is a little premature, but not wasted. There is still a lot of grooming, transporting forth and back – hope not too much "back" - and selling needed to be done. Your continued help or just now starting to pitch in help is needed and welcome.)

I finally attended an FNATS event in Orlando this month. Billy Rhodes was the ring leader of Leland C., Gerry K, Emerson L., Don C., Hank G. and myself. We went over on Friday 9/21/2001, leaving the Garden Center by 0800. When we got to the Orange County Convention Center, we split up into several groups and rarely saw each other. The show is really large and you have to budget your time to see it all in 4 hours. I traveled the show with Leland and we had to really go fast at the end to meet Billy at our agreed-to time, then we dragged Billy back in so we could see the one hall we hadn't been into at all. I picked up bunches of information sheets as well as some samples to try out. If you weren't able to attend this year, you might consider planning to attend next September.

Potential New Members, YOU Are Welcome A note for any Prospective Members reading a complimentary copy of the Bloomin' News. We are always looking for new members and have great opportunities for learning at monthly meetings, at the Tree Farm as well as special events such as FNATS (Florida Nursery and Associates Trade Show). We have a good bunch of hard working guys in the Men's Garden Club. We enjoy learning from each other as much as the friendships and fellowship we develop. As a return for members input/work, many plants are available to you at no cost. There are facilities to start plants from seeds, clippings, (and I'm sure ways your editor hasn't learned yet). We meet at 7:00 P.M. on the second Monday of each month at the Garden Center on Sisson, drop by to visit and possibly join us. For more information you may also call Tony Koromilas, 269-1931 or Leland Chernerys, 269-0667, and of course me –

Les Leckron, 267-2435, leckronl@cfl.rr.com

Special Thanks to Renaissance Grill and to Dixie Crossroads

Please patronize the **Renaissance Grille**, downtown Titusville and **Dixie Crossroads** on Garden Street. Our Men's Club was asked to provide dinner gift certificates for the District VI Fall Meeting on Sept 28th. Both of these restaurants responded to a plea for donations. If you eat there, tell them "Thanks" for the supporting the Garden Club.

October Program:

Leland Chemerys, Vice Chairman and Program Chairman reports that the October Meeting will be a good one. If the special program he is trying to finalize isn't, there will be an instruction video.

See you Monday the 8th, 7 PM at the Center.

FNATS by Billy Rhodes

FNATS Report

Seven members ended up at the Florida Nurseryman's and Allied Trade Show on Sept. 20-22. We went in two cars because part of the group made a side trip to Outdoor World after FNATS. We arrived as the show opened at nine and finished around one. The groups

split up and I went to one end and walked the entire place, row by row.

There is a lot to see, with many repeat vendors and some new ones. Missing this year was the Superthrive booth. A product that makes spectacular claims with no real proof, and they don't tell what's in it. The company that makes our ground cover for the farm was still giving out tote bags but I didn't see the mulch company with the walking sticks.

One idea for the farm is "Burr Oak" a tree with a very large leaf much like the "Turkey Oak." Sally Saclara went by as I was looking at the seedlings and she likes the tree. Reminds her of a northern oak, she says. Sally was there with a group of Master Gardeners.

I also saw some benches that I would love to have for my bonsai's. They are made of fiber glass. FNATS is a little overwhelming the first time I am sure. Hopefully the others who attended will share at our meeting or during the (hopefully) slow times of the sale.

Billy

Down on the Tree Farm

By Burl Ferguson

NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD MEN TO COME TO THE AID OF THEIR PARTY. The Sept. 28 – 29th weekend is the last plant getting ready weekend before the sale. (Ed.: paraphrased from last month's article by Burl.)

That sentence tells it all if we are to have a successful sale on Oct 6. The big job is to get trees and plants groomed and ready for sale. There are many of the tree species that have not been adopted so they will not be ready without effort from the troops. Tony is doing a great job in identifying the jobs that need to be done. So, as you have an hour or two in your schedule, PLEASE, all of you, "dig in" with the preparation effort.

(Ed.: the above, except for my update, is from the September Newsletter. In case you haven't heard, Burl is in Vista Manor, Room 103. His legs gave out on him. Rehab is coming along slowly from what I've heard. If any of you are as ignorant of it's location as I was, John Walter's was kind enough to inform me it's behind Jes Parish at the end of the road on the left side.

Burl, know for sure all of us are praying for you to

GET WELL SOON

We miss you.):

Offer your garden a little support!

<http://www.burpee.com>

(NOTE, no change from last month)

Fight garden pests with the nature's own SWAT team, good pests:

Ladybeetles: The larvae of these benign looking creatures spend all their time snacking on aphids. These hungry teenagers resemble small, fuzzy black worms with tiny legs. Later they evolve into the orange and black spotted bugs above.

Praying mantises: These six-legged killing machines are on the hunt for prey of any type. In the early spring, they tie their egg cases to low branches and when the weather warms, hundreds of hungry baby mantises will hatch out and start hunting for a meal. Mantises are not picky eaters, so they may devour a few good bugs such as honeybees.

Green Lacewings: The larvae of green lacewings feed voraciously on aphids, spider mites, thrips, moth eggs, caterpillars, leaf-hoppers and white flies. A package of 5,000 lacewing eggs controls pests over about an acre; release in three groups for the best protection.

Go on Pest Patrol! Know your enemy:

Tomato horn worms: You can pick these large green caterpillars off your tomatoes and destroy them. If they're covered with small white protrusions, they have been invaded by beneficial wasp larvae and won't survive to eat much more of your garden.

Flea beetles: Almost invisible to the naked eye, flea beetles suck plant juices totally perforating the foliage of crops such as eggplants and beans. They are particularly troublesome from late spring to mid summer. Spray plants regularly with insecticidal soap.

How to wage war on pests--the safe way!

1. Walk through your garden every day and look for pests--catching them early in their eating spree will prevent a munch-a-thon in your garden.
2. When you find an offending pest (remember, not all bugs are bad bugs), do some research to identify the pest (and learn about its life cycle and feeding habits). Then you can determine a commonsense plan of attack.
3. The simplest control method is the most effective. Handpicking works great for large pests such as tomato worms and Japanese beetles. Drop them into coffee can with water and drown them.
4. If handpicking isn't an option, biological controls are your next line of defense. *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) is a naturally occurring bacterium that stops hungry caterpillars in their tracks. Spray your crops every ten days with Bt (or after a heavy rain). Be sure to coat both sides of the plants' leaves.
5. Another excellent biological control is Insecticidal Soap. Many insect pests, such as aphids, can be eliminated with a simple soap solution.

If you must resort to a chemical control, read the label to find out if the product is recommended for the pest you are fighting. Apply the product sensibly. Don't spray on a windy day, use gloves for protection, and apply the dosage required (don't double the dosage with the idea that you'll kill twice as many bugs).

Tree Farm News

By Tony Koromilas

Weeds have taken over again and we just don't have the resources to maintain the total area. I suggest we either stop growing all the small plants unless someone wants to adopt the 4 corrals in front.

We really miss Burl and hope he will return soon to keep us in good harmony.

Those sycamores are reaching the sky and if we don't sell them at sale, we may need to donate them to Titusville. Also need to purchase some Maples unless someone can find the little guys somewhere.

Special thanks go to Emerson Johnson since he has helped me get some of the weeds out of plants for sale.

Don't forget to be at farm on Friday Morning, October 5th, for loading and weeding for sale.

Propagation awards go to Don Crocker who started viburnum, firecracker, and some Potocarpus. Trays are available for anyone. Weather is now great for having fun on the farm.

OCTOBER IN THE GARDEN

by Gil Bertie

October is one of the more pleasant months for working in the garden. Summer is almost over, nights are slowly turning cooler, and days are shorter and slightly cooler - all a relief to us and to our plants. October normally brings less rain than September, so you will need to check your lawn, shrubs, annuals and potted plants and water them when needed.

This is the last month to fertilize your lawn, palms and shrubs. Use a good 16-4-8 plus iron fertilizer on your lawn so it will be green all winter (barring frost). Apply weed control products if needed. If not already done, give shrubs and hedges a final fall pruning. Remove suckers, low limbs and trim or remove storm damaged growth. Any pruning done after mid-October will stimulate new growth that could suffer cold damage this winter. Delay all pruning of vines and fruit trees until mid-winter. Lawn insects will still be active. Sprays or granules of Diazinon, Dursban, or Baygon will help control chinch bugs, sod web worms and mole crickets. Operate sprinkler systems manually to conserve water. Water lawns when grass shows signs of stress.

Renew mulches as needed to conserve moisture during the dryer fall and winter months. To assure holiday blooms, relocate POINSETTIAS, CHRISTMAS CACTUS and KALANCHOES so no artificial light will fall on them. If you expect to plant winter and spring bulbs such as TULIPS, CROCUS, DAFFODILS and HYACINTH - NOW is the time to begin the 12 weeks of refrigeration required by the bulbs in our climate.

If you like to pick your own strawberries, now is the time to start a bed with a bundle of 25 fresh healthy plants from a nursery or garden center. Varieties that have given good yields in central Florida gardens include Florida 90, Tioga, Dover, Florida Belle and Douglas. They will also do well in full sun in a large wooden barrel, a pyramid, or in hanging baskets using a good potting mix. Three plants in a 10-inch or 4 in a 12-inch basket will flourish in full sunshine if given adequate water and fertilizer.

If not already done, give Citrus and grapes a final feeding before October 15 using 6-6-6 with minor elements or a special Citrus fertilizer. Feed cool-season annual plants monthly. Start PAPAYA seedlings for late-winter transplants.

Replant flower beds and hanging baskets with cool-season plants such as ALYSSUM, CALENDULA, CLEOME, CHRYSANTHEMUMS, CORNFLOWER, DIANTHUS, GAILLARDIA, GERANIUM, PANSY,

PERIWINKLE, PETUNIA, PHLOX, SNAPDRAGON and VERBENA.

From Your Newsletter Editor

Please send any input and/or comments, pro or con, to me via any of the following: snail mail, email or phone. (my short hand is non existent, so phone messages are best received as short ones.) : Don Crocker , 5175 Kirkwood Trail, Titusville, FL 32780-6719; 'phone 264-0947; Email - trini@digital.net

Saturday Work Day

Please remember that the Saturday after our Monthly Meeting is a day for Concerted Effort at the Tree Farm. Many hours are put in by individuals during the week at their convenience and this is very necessary for continued success.

We also have some tasks that need Teamwork to accomplish. This type work is the focus of our Saturday events.

Plan on coming out 9/15 and join the crowd at the Tree Farm

Fall Tree & Plant Sale

October 6, 2001

Put this on your calendar; please get plants ready for sale!!!

Leland Chemerys, 269-0667, is the fearless leader for this sale.

The Bloomin' News
Titusville Men's Garden Club
Don Crocker, Editor
5175 Kirkwood Trail
Titusville, FL 32780-6719

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Next meeting

Monday, September 10, 2001 – 7:00 PM

Program Information Inside

Titusville Garden Center

5275 Sisson Road

Titusville, FL 32780