



## GREEN TIMES

February 2011

Volume 11 Issue 2

**Master Gardener Meeting**  
**Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2011 at 7 pm**  
Totowa Business Center  
930 Riverview Drive, Suite 250  
Totowa, NJ

**Meet us for dinner at 5pm**  
Miranda's  
Route 23 North, Wayne NJ  
Allow 15 minutes to get to the meeting

### **“AMPLEHARVEST.ORG” with GARY OPPENHEIMER**

While 49 million people in America don't have enough food for their families, 40+ million Americans grow food in their home gardens...often more than they can use, preserve or give to friends. It doesn't have to be this way. AmpleHarvest.org founder and director Gary Oppenheimer will be talking about hunger and malnutrition in America, how to solve this problem, and how the AmpleHarvest.org campaign has changed the American food supply chain.

Gary Oppenheimer is a CNN Hero, speaker and lecturer, Passaic County Master Gardener, Rutgers Environmental Steward, former community garden director, Environmental Commissioner in West Milford, NJ, an avid gardener, and long distance cyclist.

A computer geek from the 1970s and early pioneer in the electronic mail industry, he was introduced on the Larry King Live show in May 2010 for creating the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign and for successfully rolling it out on a national scale.

In addition to helping AmpleHarvest.org continue its expansion to food pantries and gardeners nationwide, Gary also speaks about hunger and the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign, individuals making a difference in their community as well as a variety of environmental topics.



### **2011 MEETING DATES**

Board Meeting Dates  
(3rd Wednesday - 6:30 p.m.)  
Feb. 16, Mar. 16, Apr. 20,

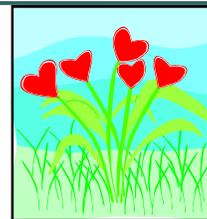
May 18, June 15, Sept. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16

General Meeting Dates  
(4th Tuesday - 7 p.m.)  
Feb. 22, Mar. 22, Apr. 26,

May 24, June 28, Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Nov. 22



## ELAINE'S CORNER



### To do in February

- ◆ Prune fruit trees and grape vines.
- ◆ Scout for tree problems like black knot on cherry and egg masses of gypsy moth on hardwoods - prune out the black knot and rub off the thumb-size brown egg masses.
- ◆ Let chilled bulbs warm up indoors for forcing.
- ◆ Try growing some paperwhite narcissus.
- ◆ Keep the bird feeder filled. Watch out for bears!
- ◆ Cut forsythia, pussy willow, redbud, lilac, magnolia, cherry and quince branches for forcing indoors.
- ◆ Late in the month, look for winter aconite, snowdrops and primrose to begin blooming. Hurray!
- ◆ Arm chair garden. I love those catalogs and magazines!

### Great Backyard Bird Count

Calling all birders! The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent and in Hawaii. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. Go to [www.birdsource.org](http://www.birdsource.org) for more information. The dates for the bird count are February 18-21, 2011.

### Expanded Helpline Hours

Beginning in March, I would like to open the Helpline from Monday through Friday, 9:30 am -noon. It would allow for more opportunities for training and assisting the public. I need a Thursday leader. Please contact my office if you can help.

### Presentation Judges Needed

Marycarmen Kunicki, 4-H program associate, needs judges for 4-H Public Presentation Night, April 14 in Wayne. Perhaps you would be willing to volunteer. Marycarmen will provide training for the event. Please call her office at 973-684-4786 to sign up.

### Tree Fruit lecture to be rescheduled

Bill Tietjen, County Agent Emeritus, will reschedule his "Tree Fruit in the Home Garden" for some time in March, at his and the class' convenience. Will it ever be spring?

### Upcoming Events

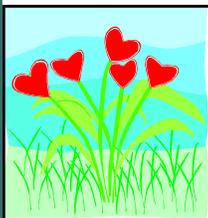
March 17-20, 2011 - Springfest, Sussex County Fairgrounds, Augusta, NJ. Discount coupons at our office or on their website: [www.springfestgardenshow.com](http://www.springfestgardenshow.com) 973-948-9448

March 26, 2011 - Garden Symposium at Stuart County Day School, Princeton, sponsored by MG's of Mercer County. [www.mgofmc.org/symposium](http://www.mgofmc.org/symposium)

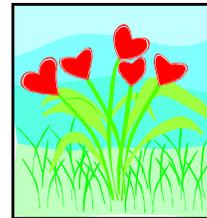
March 19, 2011 - Home Gardeners' School, SEBS campus, New Brunswick. Discounts available. Contact [ocpe@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:ocpe@njaes.rutgers.edu) or call 732-932-9271

*If you truly love Nature, you will find beauty everywhere.*

Vincent Van Gogh



Elaine Fogerty Barbour  
County Agricultural Assistant



## THE FOOD OF ROMANCE – CHOCOLATE

"The divine drink, which builds up resistance and fights fatigue. A cup of this precious drink permits a man to walk for a whole day without food" - Montezuma - Aztec Emperor (1480-1520)

A French prince received a marriage gift of chocolate from his Spanish princess, Maria Teresa. This French prince became France's King Louis XIV, renowned for his active love life. He is said to attribute this vitality to chocolate. Casanova was known to mix chocolate with champagne to seduce his mistresses. Further back in history, the Aztecs and Mayans of Central America used a hot drink of chocolate as an aphrodisiac.

So what is this chocolate and when/where does this food of romance come from? What is the history of this aphrodisiac?

Chocolate begins as a seed of the cacao nut which grows on the cacao tree. This cacao tree is indigenous to the tropical rain forest of the Amazon in South America. It can only grow 15-20 degrees north or south of the equator as it needs a moist, shady and tropical growing environment. The scientific name is *Theobroma cacao* which literally means "food of the gods." The cacao tree is a tropical evergreen that is an understory tree, needing much shade. Just a note, as beneficial as the fruit of the tree is, the leaves are poisonous.



(<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/cocoa>)

Today 70% of the world's cacao grows in West Africa. Smaller numbers of the cacao tree are grown in Indonesia, Brazil and other tropical countries. The cacao nut goes through many processes before it turns up on your table.

Scientific study has shown that dark chocolate is beneficial. Milk chocolate is too processed. The cacao bean is filled with flavonoids, an antioxidant. Flavonoids in chocolate are called flavonols. Studies have shown that eating dark chocolate may lower blood pressure, increase HDL cholesterol and lower LDL cholesterol.

Researchers have also discovered that the chemicals in chocolate encourage alertness, reduce anxiety and help in the reduction of pain. Chocolate helps raise levels of serotonin and endorphins acting as an aphrodisiac and helping with depression.

Other nutrients contained in chocolate are iron, calcium and potassium and vitamins A, B<sub>1</sub>, C, D, and E as well as other trace elements. Cocoa is the highest natural source for magnesium. Lack of magnesium is linked to such illnesses as hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, joint problems and PMS. The fat in high quality plain dark chocolate can be considered cholesterol free as it does not build up in the arteries or contribute to high cholesterol levels.

([http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/114337/sex\\_women\\_and\\_chocolate](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/114337/sex_women_and_chocolate))

— Ruth Haydn

## LAURELWOOD ARBORETUM EVENTS

FOURSEASONSOF COLOR lecture by Kerry Ann Mendez

Saturday, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> 1pm, Wayne Public Library 461 Valley Rd., Wayne

VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON

Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> 11:30am, Wayne Public Library (*By invitation only – a special thank you to our volunteers*)

— Bonnie Joachim

## WEEDING VOLUMES

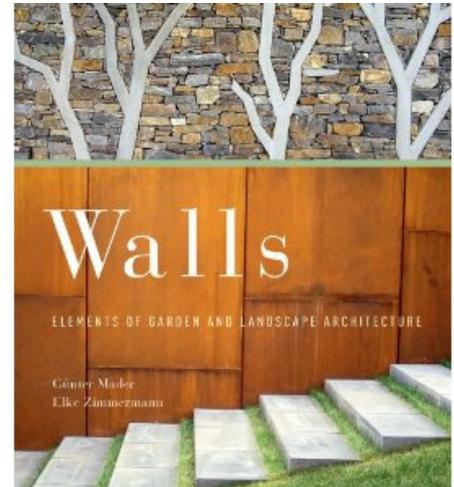
Walls – those built elements of the garden and landscape that define borders, create spaces and provide protection – are essential to the landscape designer's repertoire.

*Walls: Elements of Garden and Landscape Architecture* (W.W. Norton, Feb. 2011) by Gunter Mader and Elke Zimmermann demonstrates their visual potential and structural variety.

Arranged by construction method, construction materials and types of finish, this 136-page book offers an array of inspiring models and practical guidelines for landscape architects, designers, builders, horticulturists and all those who want a more beautiful outdoor space.

The paperback sells for \$40.

— Ray Edel



## WHERE ARE ALL THE NORWAY MAPLES?

The Norway maple is the most commonly planted street tree in the US. We recently returned from Spain where we saw no Norway maples. There were none in the excellent Madrid Botanical Garden that had North American trees and none along the streets. The most common street tree in Spain is the sycamore (London plane). There was an allee of sycamores pollarded and trained to make an arch over the walkway in winter and a canopy of shade in the summer. In September they were cutting off this year's growth (and leaves): saves clean up and keeps trees a manageable size.

Exotic Spanish street trees: catalpa, tulip, sweet gum, and southern magnolia. We went three thousand miles from home to find our ordinary trees given a starring role.

Spanish cities are willing to plant trees that require maintenance. We saw sour oranges as street trees in Valencia and elsewhere.

And then there were the 2,458,924 olive trees that we saw on the hillsides in southern Spain, but that is another story.

— Edith Wallace



Sycamore tree's exfoliating bark

## BOARD MEMBER BIO: BARBARA COOK — FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Barbara finished the Master Gardener program in 2008. She has worked on the Helpline and enjoys visiting nursing homes to participate in horticultural therapy. Barbara has been a resident of Morris County since 1972 but finds Passaic County closer. She is a representative for Passaic County to the NJ State Master Gardener Association. She is married to Douglas and has two grown sons. She is an active member of her church and an officer in the NJ State Federation of Women's Clubs. Besides gardening, she loves to cook and spends the summer in Virginia at her lake house.

**DIG IN!****CHOCOLATE BEET CAKE (OR CUPCAKES)**

Kathleen Caren brought these cupcakes to last summer's MG picnic in Ringwood.

**Ingredients:**

- ◆ 3 large beets (sans greens), quartered, steamed until soft, then peeled and pureed
- ◆ 8 oz. bittersweet baker's chocolate (or ¼ cup unsweetened powdered cocoa)
- ◆ 3 eggs (or egg substitute equivalent)
- ◆ ½ cup raw or brown sugar
- ◆ ½ cup canola oil (or plain yogurt)
- ◆ 1 Tbs. vanilla extract
- ◆ 1 cup whole wheat flour
- ◆ 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ◆ 1.5 tsp. baking soda
- ◆ ½ tsp. salt
- ◆ Optional: semi-sweet chocolate chips

**Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Grease (or use spray canola) and flour baking pan, or line cupcake tin with paper liners.
3. If using, melt the baker's chocolate in a double-boiler and let cool; otherwise, add powdered cocoa to the dry mixture in Step 5.
4. Beat eggs lightly in a large bowl and one by one, add sugar, oil (or yogurt), vanilla, melted chocolate (if using) and pureed beets (can also put all ingredients into a blender or food processor and puree). Mix well between additions.
5. In a separate bowl, sift together dry ingredients (flour, baking soda, salt, cocoa if using).
6. Add dry mixture to wet mixture and stir just to mix (be sure to not over-mix, or batter will be dry). Add chocolate chips if desired.
7. Pour into the greased pan (or cupcake tin).
8. Bake until knife inserted comes out clean:
  - 40 - 45 minutes for bundt pan (check after 35 minutes)
  - 35 minutes for 9x13 inch pan
  - 20 minutes for cupcakes (or 8-10 minutes for mini-muffins)
9. Frost if desired. Enjoy! — Kathleen Caren

**CHOCOLATE LEAVES**

- ◆ Wash and dry unsprayed, nonpoisonous leaves, such as ivy, lemon, rose or camellia.
- ◆ Paint the veiny side with melted chocolate. Chill 1 hour; then carefully pull away the leaf.

**EASY HOT CHOCOLATE**

- ◆ Melt 4 ounces semisweet chocolate chips in a double boiler (or use ½ cup chocolate syrup).
- ◆ Whisk in 6 cups milk over medium-low heat. Stir in 2 Tbs. sugar or more to taste.
- ◆ Makes 4 servings.

— Bonnie Joachim

**DIG IN!****LOW FAT AND LUSCIOUS DARK CHOCOLATE BROWNIES**

These brownies are better than a mix!

**Ingredients:**

- ◆ 1 3/4 cup sugar
- ◆ 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ◆ 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- ◆ 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- ◆ 1/2 tsp baking powder
- ◆ 7 egg whites
- ◆ 2/3 cup unsweetened applesauce (or two 4 oz jars of baby food prunes)
- ◆ 1/4 cup buttermilk
- ◆ 2 tsp vanilla
- ◆ 2/3 cup chopped toasted walnuts
- ◆ powdered sugar

**Directions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly spray a 13 x 9 x 2 inch baking pan with non-stick spray. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, stir together the sugar, cocoa, all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour and baking powder. Set aside.
3. In another large bowl, beat egg whites until foamy.
4. Slowly stir in the applesauce (or prunes), buttermilk and vanilla.
5. Add the egg mix to the flour mix and beat with electric mixer until thoroughly combined.
6. Fold in walnuts.
7. Transfer batter to prepared pan.
8. Bake about 30 minutes or until brownies just begin to pull away from the sides of the pan. Do not over-bake.
9. Cool completely on a wire rack. Lightly sprinkle with powdered sugar. Cut into 36 bars.

— Elaine Fogerty Barbour (adapted from Healthy Homestyle Cooking)

**DECADENT VEGAN TRUFFLES****Ingredients:**

- ◆ 3/4 cup raw cashews
- ◆ 3/4 cup cold water
- ◆ 1 lb grain sweetened non dairy chocolate chips
- ◆ 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- ◆ pinch ground cinnamon
- ◆ 2 Tbs. brown rice syrup
- ◆ unsweetened shredded coconut, finely chopped almonds or cocoa powder

**Directions:**

1. Blend cashews and water in a blender at high speed for 2 minutes or until mixture is creamy. Scrape down sides and process again until texture is of a heavy cream. Set aside.
2. Melt the chocolate with vanilla, cinnamon and rice syrup in a double boiler until smooth and creamy. Cool the chocolate for 3- 5 minutes and then fold the cashew cream in until fully blended. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours.
3. Use a teaspoon or small melon baller to scrape small spheres of chocolate and roll it in the coconut, almonds or cocoa powder.
4. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

— Ruth Haydn

## BUS TRIP TO PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW



A bus trip to Philadelphia Flower Show is being offered for March 7th, sponsored by Pines Lake Garden Club.

The cost is \$45.00 (Bus and ticket). Bus leaves Preakness Macy's parking lot at 8:15 am and returns at 8pm. Refreshments will be served on bus.

Send check made payable to Pines Lake Garden Club, to Ann Mooney, 31 Brook Terr. Wayne, N.J. 07470. Check for seat availability by calling 973-835-8130.

— Nancy Fadynich

## RUTGERS MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM WINS GOVERNOR'S AWARD

Rutgers Master Gardener program was one of only two statewide winners of the 2010 Governor's Environmental Excellence Award, garnering the honor in the Environmental Education/Student Activity Category.

The 2010 Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards ceremony, honoring individuals, organizations, institutions, communities and businesses that have made significant contributions in protecting New Jersey's environment, was held at the New Jersey State Museum on December 15.

The Environmental Education/Student Activity Category, which honors "the educator, student, group of students or class that has planned and implemented a project/program with measurable positive environmental impacts," was presented by Robert Martin, commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP).

"New Jersey residents are the winners through the hard work of these individuals and organizations," Commissioner Martin said. "They have made the State a better place to live. We owe them all a great deal of thanks."

Accepting the award on behalf of the Rutgers Master Gardener program was Nicholas Polanin, statewide coordinator of the program, and Rutgers Cooperative Extension agricultural and resource management agent for Somerset County.

Initiated in 1984, the Rutgers Master Gardener program is an educational volunteer training program offered in New Jersey through the efforts and expertise of faculty and staff of Rutgers Cooperative Extension. The program is designed to increase environmental awareness and stewardship through increased availability of University-based horticultural information to local communities and individuals through trained volunteers known as Rutgers Master Gardeners.

These volunteers are well known for their desire to help others and their great interest in expanding their working knowledge of gardening, horticulture and the environment. They are members of the local community who willingly and with great dedication use this knowledge to then serve as volunteer environmental educators to fellow residents. This trained volunteer base has greatly expanded the visibility and capacity of Rutgers Cooperative Extension in fulfilling its educational mission through the distribution of horticultural information to individuals and groups all across New Jersey.

Active in 18 counties throughout the state, the program has developed and enhanced many community programs related to gardening, horticulture and environmental well-being. In 2009 alone, approximately 2,400 Master Gardener volunteers gave nearly 158,000 hours in pursuit of horticultural and environmental education efforts all across New Jersey.

The annual awards event is sponsored by the NJDEP, the New Jersey Corporation for Advanced Technology and the State League of Municipalities.

— Rutgers News Release

## PLANT OF THE MONTH: ROSEMARY

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) is an evergreen shrub in the mint family, native to the Mediterranean region. It has been cultivated for its aromatic foliage and flower. In our area it can be grown outdoors in summer and as a house plant in winter. The blue flowers are seen in conservatories in this part of the country and out-of-doors in southern California. At our house at the Jersey shore a large rosemary in the ground blooms every summer.



Rosemary is an essential plant in a herb garden as the fresh leaves have the purest fragrance. Dried leaves may be too strong. It is used in cooking both meats and vegetables. Flavor is maintained during cooking.

The recipe for focaccia in *Cookwise* by Corriher states, "Rosemary enhances yeast activity and keeping quality in addition to enhancing flavor." Rosemary is considered an antioxidant.

Rosemary should also be included in a Shakespeare garden. "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance." *Hamlet*

— Edith Wallace

## A LOVE STORY

History students learn the story of the great Babylon, an ancient city located in what is now modern day Iraq. They learn that Babylon was located on the Euphrates River and was a center of trade and commerce, and that the Hanging Gardens were there. They know that the Hanging Gardens were one of the ancient seven wonders of the world. What they don't know is that the Gardens were a gift from King Nebuchednezzar to his wife.

The love story of the Hanging Gardens begins with King Nebuchednezzar's marriage to Amyitis. The marriage was an arranged one for political reasons. Amyitis was from Persia and Nebuchednezzar wanted to increase the power of Babylon by joining forces with Persia. Once Amyitis arrived in Babylon, her unhappiness was apparent to the King. She missed her home and the beauty of ancient Persia, finding Babylon hot, dry, and barren. To cheer his new bride, the King made for her one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Hanging Gardens.



The gardens did not actually hang. They were built in a series of terraces and levels supported by stone columns. The columns were filled with soil to allow trees of the largest size to be planted. Nebuchednezzar dispatched his emissaries and soldiers far and wide not only to find these trees, but the blossoming flowers and ripe fruits that filled the gardens. Slaves labored day and night to irrigate the gardens by lifting water into the air so it could flow down through the terraces watering the plants at each level.

When Nebuchednezzar completed the gardens for Amyitis, they were 400 feet long and 80 feet high and looked like a green, leafy, artificial mountain rising from the Euphrates river plain. They were indeed a gift from Nebuchednezzar to his homesick wife, complete with gushing waterfalls.

— Patricia Adelle

## PB & J

At our February meeting, we will be collecting peanut butter and jelly for the less fortunate. Please bring a jar of peanut butter and/or jelly to the meeting.

## GARDENING AND GLOBAL WARMING

Global warming...a gardener hears “warming” and may think, “Warmer – I should buy those tender perennials I’ve been eyeing.” Or, “Maybe I won’t have to lift the dahlias this fall.” Not so fast! In the midst of this cold and snowy winter, you may be wondering what all the fuss has been about global warming. It turns out the term “global warming” may be somewhat misleading. Worldwide, there has been an upward trend in temperatures over the last century, and an even more dramatic upswing over the past decade. However, many scientists are now referring to this phenomenon as “global climate change”.



A key result of the global climate change we are experiencing is extremes in weather: more record highs, more torrential rain events, more wind storms and even an increase in the number of strong hurricanes per season. Gardeners will find themselves and their plants more challenged by the weather’s lack of predictability. Here are some tips, season by season:

### Winter:

- ◆ Watch for sudden early thaws, which can cause evergreens to break dormancy. New tender growth is susceptible to damage from freezing and thawing. Apply an anti-desiccant spray if temperatures go to 50° F or more before March.
- ◆ Apply a loose layer of mulch (bark, straw, wood chips) around plants that have been heaved up by freeze/thaw cycles. Replant properly in spring once the ground is workable to avoid damaging the roots.
- ◆ In late winter, around President’s Day, prune. A properly pruned tree or shrub is less susceptible to wind and ice damage. Visit the Helpline Library for pruning guidance or attend the MG pruning class for a refresher.

### Spring:

- ◆ Make improvements to drainage if torrential spring rains have caused damage. Use raised beds, relocate sensitive plants to higher ground, and plant moisture tolerant species in low-lying areas.
- ◆ Protect tender transplants from freezing, and use shade cloth and supplemental water during early heat waves.

### Summer:

- ◆ Choose plants that tolerate extremes in temperature and moisture for mass plantings.
- ◆ Make creative use of microclimates. Plants that are less tolerant of heat may do best on the eastern side of your home. Plants that prefer heat and alkaline soil may thrive against a western foundation wall.
- ◆ Amend soil with compost to maintain fertility and improve moisture retention.
- ◆ Consider using a rain barrel to save water for extended dry periods.

### Autumn:

- ◆ Mulch perennials.
- ◆ Plant native plants. Locally grown natives have it in their genes to thrive in our area.
- ◆ Inspect gardens for items that could be harmed by strong winds. Secure trellises and outdoor furniture, and make repairs to fences.

Global climate change will be a challenge to our gardens, but with attention to detail and a willingness to edit out what doesn’t work, they can still be beautiful and healthy.

— Janet Rekesius

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