



COMPOST PILE

## Quirky Passalong Plants Author, Felder Rushing, To Speak At Lshr Annual Meeting



*Slow Gardening* will be Felder Rushing's topic when he speaks before members of the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research, March 26, at the Petroleum Club. Felder is a 10th-generation Southern gardener whose quirky, overstuffed cottage garden in Jackson, MS, which he shares with his wife and teenage children, has been featured in many gardening magazines, including Southern Living, Garden Design, Horticulture, Landscape Architecture, House and Garden, Better Homes and Gardens, the New York Times and others.

Rushing explains his topic, *Slow Gardening*, as similar to "Slow Food," with emphasis on locally-adapted plants, season rhythms, and even intense garden or horticultural interest that employ the senses.

Recently retired from the Extension Service as Mississippi's leading consumer

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## Board Announces Plans For Annual Meeting

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research has announced arrangements for the Annual Meeting of the Society to be held March 26, 2011, at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center and the Petroleum Club of Lafayette.

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 8 a.m. – 10 a.m. Registration, distribution of plant releases, coffee, juice and doughnuts
- 8 a.m. – 10 a.m. Silent Auction
- 9 a.m. Plant Auction
- 11 a.m. Open Bar at Petroleum Club
- 12 noon Buffet Luncheon  
Speaker – Felder Rushing – "*Slow Gardening*"  
Business Meeting

Events for the 2011 meeting, including Registration, Distribution of Plant Releases, Plant Auction and Silent Auction, will be held at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center, 2206 Johnston St. A Hospitality Hour, Luncheon and General Meeting will be held at the nearby Petroleum Club, 111 Heymann Blvd.

Cost of the luncheon is \$25 per person which includes tax and tip. Reservations, which must include names of guests and payment of all luncheon fees, must be received no later than Wednesday, March 23, since LSHR must give a final count to the Petroleum Club in advance. New reservations will not be accepted at the event. Please make checks payable to LSHR; please do not send cash by mail.

Luncheon reservations, including

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# From the President's Desk



Spring is on the way! We have experienced a really cold Winter in spite of the weather forecasters saying that it would be a mild one this year. Bah, humbug. But the Gold Finches are eating 25 pounds of black oil sunflower seed each week at my house not to mention the thistle that is in socks for them and the suet. I love seeing the black capped chickadees mixed in with the finches and the cardinals. None of them seem to mind that the others are on their feeders. It's only when the squirrels show up that the birds flee to the top of the crepe myrtle and wait for them to leave. Those pesky squirrels.

Before you know it our Annual Meeting will be arriving on March 26th. Felder Rushing is going to entertain us with his knowledge and wisdom of growing and enjoying our plants. He is very humorous and may even drive over in his red pickup truck with the bed planted full of flowers. We are in for a treat.

We will be electing officers for the next term of two years beginning March 2011-2013. Those who have been nominated are: President – Margo Racca; 1st VP – Albert Durio, Sr.; 2nd VP – Rob Barry; Secretary – Roxanna Champagne; Treasurer – Ruth LaVaque, Director At Large – Glenda Balliviero (2011 – 2014). We have Directors with unexpired terms not needing election are: Jeanie Kreamer – (2009-2012) and Oswald Brown (2010-2013).

We want everyone to attend the Luncheon where the Business meeting will be held following the Speaker. The food is always excellent and it is great fun to get to see our friends that we may only get to visit with once each year. Come out, pick up your healthy, beautiful plant releases, enjoy the auction, silent auction and luncheon. A great day has been planned for your enjoyment. It would behoove you to be there too and enjoy it.

*Margo Racca*  
*President*

## **NEW SECRETARY ASSUMES POSITION WITH THE BOARD**

With fondest thanks and appreciation for a job well done, we wish the best for Nancy Anne Rowe, Secretary of the Board for eight years, who will be attending other duties.

With open arms we welcome Roxanna Champagne, who will fill that position. She will have our support and sincere appreciation.

## **ASSISTANCE WILL BE PROVIDED TO MEMBERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Members who need help with Registration or with loading plant release boxes are asked to call Rob Barry at 337-277-9822. Please call in advance so that Rob can meet that member on arrival and provide whatever assistance is necessary.

## **PLEASE COMPLETE PLANT RELEASE REPORT FORM AND BRING MEMBERSHIP CARD**

At Registration for the Annual Meeting, members will be asked to turn in completed Plant Release Report forms. If needed, blank report forms will be available through the mail by request prior to the meeting by contacting Ann Justice, 202 Briargate Circle, Lafayette, LA 70503. Electronic forms can be e-mailed

to you if requested from [ajustice@bellsouth.net](mailto:ajustice@bellsouth.net). The electronic forms permit the member to type in the information, and turn in a copy at the Annual Meeting.

## **ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES FOR ANNUAL MEETING**

**Registration:** Aline Arceneaux, Ruh LaVaque

**Plant releases:** Billy Welsh

**Auction plant acquisitions:** Rob Barry, Billy Welsh,  
Albert Durio, Norman Balliviero

**Plant auctioneers:** Albert Durio, Heidi Sheesley

**Auction clerks:** Rob Barry, Margo Racca

**Floor duties:** Jim Racca, Leonard Lasseigne,  
Dennis Wollard

**Silent auction:** Rebecca Moss

**Hospitality:** Dr. Ellis Fletcher and Ann Justice

## **GARDENING-RELATED ITEMS NEEDED FOR SILENT AUCTION**

Members are asked to donate items to the Silent Auction held between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Popular are gardening tools, pots and books. Items can be next-to-new or discards which another gardener might find useful, Please deliver items Friday evening (March 25th) or before 8 a.m. March 26. Contact Rebecca Moss, 337-232-2541 for information.

## **LSHR MAIL AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES:**

Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research  
PO Box 1473  
Breux Bridge, LA 70517-1473  
[LSHR@aol.com](mailto:LSHR@aol.com)

## **OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS OF LSHR**

Margo Racca, President  
Albert Durio, Sr., First Vice-President  
Rob Barry, Second Vice-President  
Roxanna Champagne, Recording Secretary  
Ruth LaVaque, Treasurer

## **DIRECTORS AT LARGE**

Norman Balliviero 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011  
Jeanie Kreamer 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012  
Oswald Brown 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013

## **PAST PRESIDENTS WITH CURRENT MEMBERSHIP**

Richard (Dick) Calhoun  
Mary Courville  
Belle Durio  
Dalton Durio  
Leonard Lasseigne  
Barbara Nelson  
James (Jim) Racca

## **DIRECTORS OF RESEARCH**

Dennis Wollard, Director  
Kenneth (Ken) Durio, Associate Director

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# Congratulations To Glenda And Norman Balliviero

*Editor's note: We are grateful to the Lafayette Parish Master Gardener Association for allowing us to use this article from their February 2011 Newsletter. Glenda and Norman are active members of LSHR, as well as numerous other horticulture organizations.*

Glenda and Norman Balliviero were recently awarded the 2011 Life Member plaque by the Louisiana State Horticulture Society in Baton Rouge for their contributions to Louisiana horticulture through education.

Usually, the plaque is given to an individual, but this year it was given jointly to this hard working team for their work promoting horticultural education in the community.

Stuart Gauthier, president of the society, made the presentation.

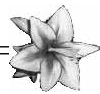
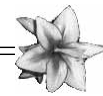
Glenda also gave a presentation at the Conference on the topic of the LPMGA Children's Garden and Educational programs. She was also one of the presenters at the Hilltop Arboretum Symposium held at LSU on January 15.

Glenda said she felt very honored to be recommended by Dr. Odenwald, LSU professor emeritus, and was very proud of the many wonderful compliments given to her by conference attendees. She will be sharing many



of her ideas with the Arboretum and various Master Gardener organizations in the near future.

Not only do Glenda and Norman oversee the LPMGA Children's Garden and do educational programs at the Demo Gardens, they also do power point presentations in the schools of Acadiana, programs at the Greenhouse, and at Evangeline Oaks Nursing Home in Carencro.



## **MEETING SPEAKER**

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horticulturist, he has studied gardens around the world, including Europe, South America and Africa, as well as hundreds of trips around our own continent as he lectures in 20 or more states every year coast to coast. He has appeared on HGTV, Mississippi Public Broadcasting, the Discovery Channel, and has gardening columns in two newspapers.

Rushing has written or authored over a dozen gardening books, including the popular, award-winning *Passalong Plants*.

Believing that too many of his fellow horticulturists complicate things unnecessarily, Felder says that we are "daunted, not dumb." He has spent a lifetime trying to make gardening as easy as it is fun.

## *In memory of . . .*

The Members of the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research express their sympathy to the families of

***Barbara Furnas Nelson***

***Zoe Sagrera Lynch***

***Gary Joye***

for the loss of their loved ones. Barbara and Zoe were dedicated members of our Society who contributed in many ways to carry out the mission of the Organization. Gary was a former Professor of Horticulture at the University of Southwest Louisiana and owner of Grand Coteau Nursery.

Memorial contributions can be made in their names to the Ira Nelson Horticultural Endowment Fund at ULL, Office of Development, P. O. Drawer 43410, Lafayette, LA 70504.

# The Best Fig for Louisiana

My customers at Durio Nursery often ask me to recommend a fig. With over 70 varieties in stock, this is not an easy task. Yes, I said over 70 different varieties!

**Malta** (aka Celeste, Sugar Fig, Blue Celeste, Tennessee Mountain Fig, Celestial, Honey Fig) is the rather small but delightfully tasty fig that most people remember from their childhood: A very dependable producer of high quality, especially sweet figs even in unfavorable weather due to its small, tightly closed eye. These light brown to violet brown figs are excellent for eating fresh, dried or in preserves. It is a good fig no doubt, but there are better varieties available.

Dr. Ed O'Rourke of Louisiana State University has created many hybrids over the years. Some were released years ago and some have just recently been released. Obviously, all are good for Louisiana.

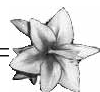
**Hailier** is an older release with greenish yellow figs having amber flesh of excellent flavor. It is a dependable producer of medium sized figs up to 2 inches in diameter.

**LSU Everbearing** is also an older' release. It bears its medium sized, yellow-green figs over an extended season. These have white to amber flesh of high quality.

**LSU Gold** is relatively new. It produces huge figs of a bright golden color with tender, exceptionally sweet, amber flesh.

**LSU Purple** is another relatively new variety. It bears dark purple figs over an extended period. These have light strawberry red flesh of excellent flavor with high sugar content.

Champagne (aka Golden Celeste) is one of LSU's newest



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## **ANNUAL MEETING** *Continued from page 1*

names and payment for the meal, should be mailed to LSHR c/o Ruth LaVaque, Treasurer, P.O. Box 1473, Breaux Bridge, LA 70517.

### **THE LUNCHEON MENU**

- Tossed Greens with Choice of Dressing
- Dinner Rolls with Butter
- Sliced Sirloin Flank Steak with Gravy
- Fried Filet of Catfish
- Sliced Roast Breast of Turkey with Natural Gravy
- Steamed Broccoli
- Corn Macque Choux
- Parsley Potatoes
- Cornbread Dressing
- Fruit Pie
- Chocolate Cake

releases. It bears yellow figs with caramel colored flesh of outstanding taste and quality.

**O'Rourke** (aka Improved Celeste) is another of LSU's newest releases. It produces medium sized figs with light brown skin and amber flesh. Good flavor and later production than 'Celeste.'

**Tiger** (aka Giant Celeste) is also one of LSU's newest releases: It produces large brown figs with yellow to gold flesh. Again, it has good flavor and bears later than 'Celeste.'

Of course, these are not the only good figs. All are worthy of trying provided you have the room. If you have even more space, you should also consider some of these other varieties.

**Beall** produces some of the largest figs available. They are much larger than 'LSU Gold' and are almost as dark as 'LSU Purple' in color. The flavor is excellent and though not producing many figs at once, produces them over an extended period.

**Brown Greek** also has very large figs. They are brown as the name indicates with tender, sweet, reddish flesh. One of the main attractions of this variety is that it produces figs almost all season long.

**Florentine** is also known as the Italian Honey Fig. It produces figs just as large as those of 'LSU Gold' but much sweeter when conditions are right. They are lemon green with honey colored flesh.

**Guilbeau French** has medium sized, golden brown figs that are produced nearly all summer long. The flesh is pink and very sweet. Very popular wherever it is grown.

**Sal's** is a heavy producer of medium sized figs that are very dark purple to almost black in color. They have very tasty, strawberry colored flesh and are produced over an extended period. This clone is extremely hardy.

By selective planting, one can have figs for close to 12 months of the year. Choose some of these great varieties and you will be glad you did as they are all great for Louisiana. Come rain or shine, they all do well and are all able to survive our coldest winters. Provide a little fertilizer in the spring and water during the drought of summer and your plant will reward you richly with quality produce.



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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** *Continued from page 2*

### **HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS OR OTHER**

- Aline Arceneaux (Past Treasurer)
- Ellis Fletcher (Membership Chairman)
- Ann Justice (Current Editor, *Compost Pile*)
- Rebecca Moss (Past Editor, *Compost Pile*)
- William (Billy) Welsh, (Release Propagator Coordinator)

# White House Garden a National Treasure

## THE GARDEN GROWS

The land now occupied by the White House garden was being cultivated nearly 400 years ago, when Capt. John Smith saw from his ship the long ridge that sloped south to marshes along the Potomac River. It then belonged to the Algonquin and Nacotchtankes tribes, who were farmers and hunters. By the time of the American Revolution, English colonial planters, in possession for five generations, had divided it up and laid it to waste planting tobacco.

For the last two centuries, the garden surrounding the White House has offered a refuge for the nation's Presidents and their families. On the grounds first envisioned by George Washington in 171, Thomas Jefferson planted trees and built a fence and James Monroe added Jefferson's stone wall. A gardener, John Quincy Adams, who liked working the soil himself, began the flower gardens, and Andrew Jackson polished the landscape with new trees, flowers and paths. Succeeding presidents have added their own contributions to help create one of the most historic gardens in America.



## A DAY IN THE WHITE HOUSE GARDEN

The garden day begins quietly at sunup, when the tranquility of the White House is its wonder. Daylight illuminates the far vistas of monuments, river, and parks and penetrates the closer deep showers of the thick plantings of trees and the sheltered gardens near the President's house. On any given day the walls of the building itself are likely to take on an orange or pink or lilac iridescence, briefly, before the white asserts itself. By 7 a.m., when the first human presence appears, all is light and order.

On this late spring morning a green truck grinds through the Southwest Gate. Six men in jump suits sit atop a pile of mulch; they laugh and joke, but in voices so low that they are not heard over the motor's quiet hum. They stop at a spot for which plans have been made a season in advance.

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## FYI: Compost Shake from Kitchen Scraps

If you find keeping an outdoor compost pile overwhelming, you may be happy to read about this quick method for providing nutrients for outdoor potted plants. This easy routine, which has recently become part of my daily or weekly habit, gives me a lot of satisfaction as I put these scraps to use.

Here's the method. Store vegetable scraps, egg shells and coffee grounds in a tightly lidded blender until the blender is about half full. After adding enough water to fill the blender, turn it on high. The consistency of the resulting "shake" should be similar to milk.

Loosen the soil around the plant with a fork (poking holes down into the soil will have the same effect), then water thoroughly. The object here is to enable the compost to run down to the roots. They will benefit most from this concoction. Now give your plant a nice big swig of this juicy compost shake. Wash any unsightly particles of food that appear on the foliage with a sprinkle of fresh water.

### Follow up

I hear a tapping on my patio door. It is my neighbor wanting my coffee grounds. She needs them for her pansies.

The workmen are planting a flower bed for summer. The long, broad bed wraps around the south fountain and is edged by a carpet of close-clipped lawn. It's bounty of flowers turned from red to brindle in the hot sun.

The men jump down and swarm, ruthlessly pulling from the black soil the nodding heads of wilting red tulips that for weeks have made such a show. The outcast bulbs are piled on the truck, and the workers take to the dirt with their shovels, chopping it finely and spreading a snowy nutrient, which they work into the soil so that the white finally disappears into the black.

Most of the soil in the White House flower beds is rich in nutrients as well as earthworms. Practically anything will grow, although Washington's is an inconstant climate: too far north for many southern plants and too far south for many northern plants. Fertilizing by the clock helps ensure the new display of flowers to come. The White House tends to be intolerant of poor shows.

A smaller truck stops in the Rose Garden with trays of seedlings to be planted. Here are summer asters, daisies, phlox, black-eyed Susans, candytuft, mullein, coral-bells, all old-fashioned flowers massed together to rise by late June to floral abundance that will last until the first frost in October. Then, they too will be pulled out and replaced by chrysanthemums, overplanted with pansies that will dominate the bed for the winter. Years of trial and error have made the White House garden one of extraordinary variety.

The gardeners, finished in a mere three hours, clean up the areas and vanish with their trucks. The only evidence that they were there is visible mainly to other gardeners.

(Excerpted from *The White House Garden*, the White House Historical Association, 1996)

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## From the Treasurer's Desk



Dear Members,

As this goes to press, almost 85% of our members have paid their dues – if you are among them, we thank you! Membership cards have been mailed to members whose dues have been received. If you have not received your 2011 membership card, please contact me by e-mail at [Ruthiesgarden@cox.net](mailto:Ruthiesgarden@cox.net) or at the return address of the Compost Pile.

If you have not sent your dues in yet, now is the time to take care of that. Dues unpaid on February 28<sup>th</sup> will result in suspension of membership. Unlike previous years, a suspended membership may no longer be reinstated just by sending a request for reinstatement and payment for dues.

Due to a change in the By-Laws, which was approved by the membership on March 20, 2010, "a suspended member may attain membership after being nominated by a member in good standing and following both the approval of the Board of Directors and a positive response to an official invitation to join the Society." Don't be left out – mail your dues today!

As always, plant distributions will be made only to members who present their own current membership card.

We look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting!

*Ruthie LaVaque*  
Treasurer

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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A Favorite LSHR Plant Release

## A Favorite LSHR Release – Sandpaper Vine

By Jeannie Kreamer

My favorite plant, the Sandpaper Vine, almost crept up on me. While a lovely, lush vine for a number of years, it nonetheless held back its most endearing feature, beautiful clusters of purple-blue blossoms until year four. Since then, it has not stopped blooming from summer through fall.

A tough, dependable plant, the Sandpaper Vine [*Petrea volubilis*] is a 2001 LSHR release. Only guessing on my part as to how it got its name, this interesting common name cleverly describes the rough, sandpaper-like texture of its leaves.

One wonderful characteristic of the Sandpaper Vine is a lush growing habit. As it ages, the vine itself develops a woody, bark like texture as contrasted to its tender newer growth. The sturdy vine really thrives if it doesn't freeze over winter. Regardless a gorgeous, dark green upper leaf surface contrasts with a bronze under leaf, creating an unusual and very pleasing plant. Interestingly the sandpaper quality of each leaf is obvious and lends a curious overall appearance to the entire vine.



The unexpected surprise is its blooms. The accompanying picture shows that the blooms of this lovely vine are spectacular. It is a tireless bloomer until a frost, starting this flower show as summer warms. Bees love the nectar. Easy to maintain with only light pruning, this vine can be easily trained if given a structure, trellis, or support. It does freeze back to ground level however the Sandpaper Vine bounces back in spring, as beautiful as ever.