Beat the heat and join your fellow Master Gardeners for some great photo fun! On August 5th, 2009 we will be having our annual Travis County Master Gardner’s Photo contest and ice cream social. That’s right; you now have the chance to show your photo and gardening skills all at the same time. Enter your favorite pictures of your Flower Garden, Vegetable Garden, Water Garden or even your grandkids in a garden; it really doesn't matter as long as there's a garden in it.

Come join us for a mid-summer social with your fellow Master Gardeners at the Zilker Botanical Garden Clubhouse on August 5th at 7:00 PM. Bring a desert, dip or your favorite appetizer. We will provide some hot decaf, ice cream and other beverages. Enjoy spending time with friends and make some new ones while we consume the wonderful treats, and the beautiful photos on the screen in the background.

Winner will be announced at our meeting on August 5th. Prizes will be awarded on over all appeal, composition and creativity.

Jerry Naiser
Vice president Programs
As we end the first half of this year, a couple of important tasks are nearing completion. The revised edition of the Garden Guide for Austin and Vicinity is almost ready for a final review before it goes to the printer. Based on the number of inquiries we have had from businesses that want to purchase copies to sell to their customers, there is still a great demand for this document. We do not have any copies remaining of the last edition so it is important to keep moving forward with our revisions and get it back in circulation.

Also, still in the works is our forthcoming xeriscape publication. About a year ago we obtained all the rights to this document from the City of Austin who had published it under the title of Xeriscape for Central Texas. Leading this revision and update is Anne Van Nest. She has solicited the assistance of many of our members who have expertise on this topic. New sections have been added and other sections expanded. It will be published under a new title later this year. It goes without saying that this is a timely publication given the brutal summer we have experienced to date. I'm so pleased that TCMGA and AgriLife Extension are producing a document that focuses on water wise landscaping for Central Texas.

Thanks goes to Cheryl Harrison, Publications Director and her team for their good work on the Garden Guide and to Anne Van Nest and her group of writers for their contributions to the xeriscape publication. Good work, everyone! We're all looking forward to seeing these documents in print.

And, since we're talking about xeriscape and water wise landscaping, have any of you taken stock of what has survived and thrived in your gardens despite the heat and drought? Susan Decker and I talked about it briefly one day not too long ago. So this morning while I was doing my daily watering, I took a few minutes to make a list of the plants that have done well with only weekly or bi-weekly watering.

On my list are: turk’s cap, skullcap, gopher plant, bottle brush, germander, butterfly iris, plumbago, lambs ear, lantana, desert willow, butterfly bush, bulbine, Mexican honeysuckle, bamboo muhly, Mexican feather grass, Texas pistache, duranta, asparagus fern, ice plant, indigo spires, beauty bush, evergreen clematis, esperanza, plumeria, leatherleaf mahonia, and the usual agaves and yuccas. I was surprised how many plants were on my list. What’s on yours?

Actually, I think that if my grass was a little greener my garden would look pretty good right now. But the grass will just have to make do with the once or twice a week I water it. Eventually it will rain... right?

Everyone, please go out and do a little rain dance. But do it early in the morning because it’s just too darn hot for dancing outside!
This Texas native, Pavonia lasiopetala is in the Malvaceae (Hibiscus) family and is perfectly happy growing in suburban gardens in Central Texas as it is growing along a fence on U.S. Highway 290. It is native to a wide range of Texas from the Edwards Plateau, Rio Grande plains and Trans-Pecos areas.

Texas Rock Rose is extremely drought and sun tolerant, which makes it a great low water use garden plant and a tough one to boot. Texas Rock Rose is also known as Rock Rosemallow or Texas Swampmallow.

One of the most attractive features of the plant are the bright rose-pink, hibiscus-like, blooms. These showy 5-petal flowers appear frequently during the (late spring) summer and into the fall. The 1” flowers open in the morning and close in the afternoon during the hottest sun. Plant Rock Rose in a partly shaded location and the blooms may even stay open into the evening.

Texas Rock Rose is a small shrubby plant that can get leggy and a bit floppy; selectively head back the longest branches to keep it in a nicer shape. Ultimately it will grow to about 3 feet tall and wide.

It is hardy to zones 8-9, but can be grown successfully beyond this if it is mulched well and planted where it will get winter protection (on the south side of a building for example). If the roots don’t freeze it will die down to the mulch layer and come back up again the next spring.

Rock Rose is not a hugely long lived shrub, some say it only lasts about 6 years -- so take cuttings, or let it reseed to replace itself.

The velvety, bright green, rounded, heart-shaped foliage is also attractive. It can be deciduous or evergreen depending on the severity of the winter.

Texas Rock Rose is easy to grow, generally insect-free, drought tolerant and requires little care. A winning plant for the garden! As an added benefit, it attracts butterflies and bees. The Texas Rock Rose is an official Plants For Texas plant.
Other Pavonia to consider:

Pavonia braziliensis (Brazilian Rock Rose), hardy to zones 8-11, pale pink to pinkish-white bloom, dark green leaf, and a lance-shape leaf.

Pavonia hastata (Pale Pavonia, Pink Pavonia), hardy to zones 8-10, native to South America, large shrub to 4 ft tall, pale whitish pink 2” blooms with maroon center, and dark green foliage.
August is here, and though the heat continues it is time to start preparations for the cool-season garden. Most spring planted vegetables have fizzled out by now, so go ahead and take them out of their misery by sending them to the compost pile; if they are diseased send them to the trash. Peppers, eggplant and okra are the exception – if you keep them watered and fertilized they will reward you with an abundant harvest over the next two to three months.

After our long, hot summer, the organic matter in our gardens will be depleted, so now is a good time to amend your soil with a generous layer of compost and top with mulch; then it will be ready and waiting when planting time comes around in September. If you haven’t done a soil test in the last 3 years, why not do it now?

Seeds of broccoli, cauliflower, collards, kale, cabbage, and Swiss chard can be started now for transplanting in September and/or October. You may have limited success starting them in a shaded spot outside, but because it is so hot this time of year I usually start mine indoors under fluorescent lights. When they are big enough for transplanting to the garden, I will gradually expose them to the warmer conditions outside, keeping them well-watered and protected from direct sun. But you don’t have to grow your own transplants as most local nurseries usually carry a good supply.

If you have the space in your garden, fall is a great time to make a second planting of fast growing, warm-season vegetables like beans, cucumbers and summer squash. These vegetables take around 50-60 days to produce when seeded directly in the garden, so if we plant them now we should get a generous harvest before the first frost, which usually comes in late November.

Corn can also be planted in early August, but keep an eye out for the corn earworm – they seem to be as big a pest in the fall as they are in the spring (and they are a pretty bad pest in the spring)! Look for early maturing varieties that produce in 75-80 days like Ambrosia,
Bodacious or Sugar Buns. If you can't find seed packets at your local garden center, these varieties, along with many other selections, are available from Willhite Seed (www.willhiteseed.com).

Many gardeners are experimenting with the square foot method of gardening as it is a good way to plant intensively in a small space without digging up the yard. Our cool season crops are well suited for this method since they don't grow as big as our warm season tomatoes, squash, cucumbers and okra. If you are interested in learning more, check out the website www.squarefootgardening.com. Also, the Natural Gardener put in several square foot garden beds last year, so be sure to visit their demonstration garden the next time you are out there.

Here's to a bountiful harvest!
Not everyone was out of town for the 4th of July weekend, a lively group of Master Gardeners and MG Interns spent Friday morning before the holiday in the TCMGA greenhouse.

With a long list of things to propagate, clean up (weeding under benches) and pot (long overdue 4” pot bound plants were bumped up to gallons), the group mixed-it-up and got a lot accomplished. Thanks to all who contributed!

The amaryllis donated by Brent and Becky’s Bulbs are starting to bloom in the greenhouse. Three bulbs of five types of ‘Pamela’ (scarlet), ‘Green Goddess’ (whitish green), ‘Pink Impression’ (pink with a white star center), ‘Benfica’ (deep cranberry red) and ‘San Remo’ (light pink with a darker pink star) have been donated. So far some of the ‘Pamela’ and ‘Green Goddess’ have bloomed.

The City of Austin staff have expanded their security procedures for access to the Zilker Botanical Garden service area to now include weekends. This will affect only those that need to drive to the TCMGA greenhouse to pick up or drop off heavy or large items during the weekend when there isn't a greenhouse work day. If you have to drive to the greenhouse on a Saturday or Sunday and find the chain across the service road from the public parking lot, proceed to the gift shop where they will contact someone to unlock the chain while you unload or load your items. If you don't need to unload or load any items on the weekend, you can park in the public parking lot and walk to the TCMGA greenhouse. The chain will not be erected during regularly scheduled greenhouse work days. Note that the gift shop is open from 10 am to 5 pm on Saturdays and 1 pm to 5 pm on Sundays. This does not affect weekday (during the day) visits to the greenhouse.

See you in the Greenhouse!
Hi everyone! I hope that you are all weathering this overwhelming heat better than I am. Yes, it was hot in the desert, but at least it was a dry heat. (I'm not too crazy about all the perspiring I'm doing!)

I've been busy getting settled in, and still don't quite yet have my routine organized. But I have been starting to meet with some of the Master Gardener project leaders. Most recently, I met with the demonstration garden team. We had a very productive sharing session, and I'm really excited about their plans for the demonstration garden. Perhaps best of all their plans (for me, at least) is a new vegetable garden, to be located virtually steps from my office door. I can't wait to try some of their harvest later this year! If you haven't been out to a demonstration garden workday for awhile, you really don't know what you're missing. The most recent workday was blessed with overcast skies, relatively comfortable temperatures, and a slight breeze--how nice that it wasn't unbearable. The team could definitely use all the help that they can get, so watch for the next workday notice, and please join us for a good ol' gardening time!

Hope to see you all very soon!

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What’s Bugging You? Chinch Bugs

By Wizzie Brown, Travis County Extension Entomologist

Do you have brown, patchy areas in your lawn? Your lawn might be experiencing what many other lawns are this time of year- chinch bugs. Chinch bugs like hot, dry conditions and often crop up in areas adjacent to sidewalks and driveways. There are other things that cause damage similar to chinch bug damage, such as white grubs or take-all patch, so it’s important to check the turf to determine the presence of chinch bugs.

Chinch bug adults (Figure 1) are tiny and black with white wings. Some adults have fully developed wings while others have wings that are reduced. Immature chinch bugs are wingless, pinkish-orange with a white line running across their back. To check for chinch bugs in your turf, part the grass in the yellowing to healthy grass area and look for the bugs crawling around.

Once chinch bugs have been identified, a treatment decision can be made. Most chinch bug formulations are going to be liquid or granular. Granular products are usually put out using a push spreader and should be watered in to allow the insecticide to reach the insects. Liquid products can either be tank mixed or attached to the end of a water hose for application. Look for active ingredients such as bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, cypermethrin, deltamethrin, permethrin, imidacloprid and trichlorfon. Read and follow all label instructions of the product you choose.

Figure 1. Chinch bug adult. Photo by Wizzie Brown
Shades of Green Nursery
334 West Sunset Road
San Antonio, Texas 78209
210-824-3772
http://www.shadesofgreensa.com/index.php

My brother is always talking about his favorite gardening show on San Antonio's KTSA radio. The host, Bob Webster, is co-owner of Shades of Green Nursery. Since my brother speaks so highly of him, I thought I'd check out his nursery.

Opened in 1981, this beautiful nursery includes various display beds that include many great ideas. As I meandered through the displays of unique structures, fountains, pots and garden art, I was amazed at the quality and variety of plant material. The philosophy of the nursery is “to offer the highest quality plants and gifts, to have the friendliest and most knowledgeable staff, and to provide the highest standard of service.” True to their philosophy, all of the plants were in excellent shape and the staff was extremely helpful.

The nursery has many unusual water features, including disappearing fountains. They also specialize in unusual plants, including many pruned into standards. The gift shop has a wide assortment of garden-related products and unique garden art. Shades of Green is dedicated to organic gardening and as such, carries a large line of organic products.

It is a bit difficult to find, but the “mapquest” map took us right to the nursery. Bob Webster's radio garden show is aired on Saturdays from 6am-9am and Sundays from 8am-11am on 550 AM, KTSA.
On an early spring trip to Houston, we re-visited two nurseries we love in the heart of the Heights area. It was a cold, rainy day, but we still found plenty to warm our gardening hearts.

Joshua’s Native Plants & Garden Antiques
502 West 18th St
Houston, TX 77008
713-862-7444
www.joshuasnativeplants.com

This wonderful nursery always has a new plant discovery – this time it was the Nun’s Orchid. Joshua’s also has great prices as well as a large inventory. There is a lot of inventory in a small area, so look carefully. You can get great ideas on how to set up a fountain in your own garden from a beautiful selection of recirculating fountains on display. Joshua’s also sells bulk recycled tumbled glass to use around your fountain. When you have finished shopping for plants, be sure to take time to browse through the huge warehouse full of antiques for your garden and home. Joshua himself always seems to be on hand to answer questions and has a very helpful staff. What a fun place to shop!

Another Place in Time
1102 Tulane
Houston, TX 77008
713-864-9717
info@anotherplaceintime.com

Just a few blocks away is another interesting neighborhood nursery. I wish I lived in this neighborhood – I would shop here often! You also can find unusual plants here, such as a beautiful Shooting Star Clerodendrum. Although it is a small nursery, there is a lot of color here. You’ll find excellent quality plants, as well as a beautiful garden shop. Voted the Best Small Nursery in the Houston Chronicle Ultimate Houston poll, this lovely nursery bills itself as “an uncommon garden shop” and that it is. Definitely worth a visit (or two).
As you wrap up the summer vegetable plot and prepare for the fall, I offer a few hints and reminders. Pull out and dispose of the plant material that has fought the good fight. Diseased and worn-out plants will only continue to attract disease and bugs.

If you had an especially wonderful tomato plant, you may want to propagate it. Simple layering is an excellent way to create fall plants. First, I prune out dead material and leave a simple plant with a couple of long viable stems. A viable stem has vigorous tip growth. Pull off the remaining leaves beginning about 4-6” behind the tip growth. Gently fold the stem over to the soil. Bury the stem area behind the tip in the soil. It may be helpful to insert a pin (or U shape coat hanger) to hold the stem in place. Be sure to continue to water both the plant and layered stem. Once viable roots hold the plant in place, sever the new plant from the mother plant. The new plant can remain or in a few days you can lift and replant.

Apart from F1 hybrids, tomatoes come true to type from seed, so it is worth saving seeds. Collect seeds from fruit that has ripened past the eating stage. Cut open and squeeze the pulp and seeds into a glass dish/bowl. Cover with plastic wrap, punching holes to allow air to enter. Label and leave undisturbed in a warm place for 2-3 days. A thick skin should form, and the gel that coats the seeds will ferment (and smell). After 3-4 days (no longer) scoop the skin off the top and rinse the seeds thoroughly in a sieve under running water. Spread out on wax paper (not paper towels) to dry. Label (include date) and store in airtight container. Seeds can be stored in a cool, dry place for up to four years. Tip: Use those little silica packets that come in electronics and shoeboxes to absorb excess moisture in your sealed seed box and store the whole thing in the refrigerator.

By the way, the bees are doing great. They have formed 4 large combs and working on 2 more. So far so good.
ig lovable dog - $40 a month for food.  Water dish - $10.  The look on this squirrel’s face – priceless.  Ramona Urbanek’s sweet boy, Kody, wishing she’d open that door.

**Recipe From the Garden: Green Bean, Red Onion, and Mint Salad**

1 clove garlic, crushed with the side of a knife
1/3 cup finely chopped mint, such as peppermint, spearmint, or pineapple mint
1 1/2 lb. tender green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch lengths
3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 small red onion, cut into thin wedges (1/2 cup)
2 cups small red or yellow pear tomatoes, halved lengthwise
1/2 tsp. celtic or sea salt
1/4 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat a large pot of salted water to boiling.  Meanwhile, rub the inside of a salad bowl with the garlic. Reserve any remaining garlic for another use.  Add the mint to the bowl; set aside.

2. Add the green beans to the boiling water; stir until the water returns to boiling.  Cook the beans, covered, for 6 to 8 minutes or until tender to the bite but still bright green.  Drain and immediately add the hot beans to the mint, tossing to combine.  Add the olive oil; toss.  Add the onion, tomatoes, salt, and pepper and toss again.  Serve warm or at room temperature.  Makes 6 servings.
**Out and About**

**Public Seminars**

**Rose Care for Summer Heat and Fall Blooms**
Thursday, August 6, 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
Travis County AgriLife Extension Office, 1600 “B” Smith Rd, Austin 78721
854-9600

Join us for a discussion focusing on reducing stress on your roses during extreme summer heat to help produce a strong fall bloom. Also, learn about designing a rose garden in a small space.

Session will start in the conference room with about a 45-minute discussion of rose care. The seminar will move outside to the rose area to illustrate some of the principles discussed. The rose garden design portion will follow in the conference room.

Seminar presenters are Travis County Master Gardeners. Reservations are not taken; just come!

**Fall Vegetable Gardening**
Saturday, August 22, 2009, 10am-Noon
Riverplace Country Club, 4207 River Place Blvd.

Cooler weather is just around the corner and now is the time to prepare your vegetable garden for the fall and winter season. Join Master Gardener Vegetable Specialist, Patty Leander, to learn the basics of vegetable gardening with an emphasis on varieties that flourish in the fall and winter months. Broccoli, lettuce, swiss chard, radishes and spinach are among the fantastic crops that grow well in our cooler season. Vegetable gardens don't end in fall, so come learn how to keep yours going year round.

**Redesigning Your Gardens**
Saturday, September 12, 1-3pm
Old Quarry Branch, Austin Public Library, 7051 Village Center Dr. (off Far West Blvd.)
(512) 345-4435

Does your garden need a remodel, but you're just not sure where to start? Attend this seminar to learn basic landscape design and gain the confidence to go from analysis through concept to a final planting plan. Using design principles such as texture, color and function, this seminar will teach you how to create a landscape plan for the garden you've always wanted.

This seminar is free, open to the public and requires no reservations. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners Association, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more details, see [http://www.tcmastergardeners.org](http://www.tcmastergardeners.org) or call the Travis County Master Gardener's help desk at (512) 854-9600.

**DIY Pond Building**
Saturday, September 19, 2009, 10am-Noon
American Botanical Council, 6200 Manor Rd
Call 512-854-9600 to reserve a space

Always dreamed of a little pond in your yard? Not only can you have one but you can build it yourself. Come attend this free seminar and learn step by step lessons on the basics of building a pond yourself. This seminar will help you determine the supplies and equipment needed for the job, gather information about pond plants, and determine which fish will do well in your pond. In addition, hear instructions on general pond maintenance, installing pond lighting and how to prevent unwanted
critters in your pond. There is no charge for the seminar, but seating is limited so please call 512-854-9600 to reserve a space.

Propagation 101: Growing New Plants for Your Garden  
Saturday, Sept. 26, 2009, 11am-1pm  
Yarborough Public Library, 2200 Hancock Dr., Austin TX

Fall is the perfect time to plant perennials, but you don’t have to go buy new plants. Attend this free seminar on plant propagation and learn how to grow your own plants from seeds or existing plants.

Attendees will learn multiple ways to propagate plants including cutting, layering, division, and seed propagation. In addition, learn tips on transplanting and care for your new plants to get them off to a strong start when planted.

This seminar is free, open to the public and requires no reservations. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners Association, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more details, see http://www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Travis County Master Gardener's help desk at (512) 854-9600.

For the Love of Trees  
Saturday, October 10, 1-3pm  
Old Quarry Branch, Austin Public Library, 7051 Village Center Dr (off Far West Blvd.)

Join us to learn all about how to do right by your trees. Learn the right trees to choose for your Central Texas landscape by choosing those that enjoy our native soils and tough climate. Understand how to select the right tree for the right location by considering mature height, longevity, light needs, and leaf coverage. Hear how to correctly plant a tree to give it a strong start and secure location for its lifespan. Finally, learn how to care for and prune your tree for long-term health and during times of stress such as construction or drought.

10th Annual Renewable Energy Roundup and Green Living Fair

FREDERICKSBURG, Texas Sept. 25- 27, 2009 – Texans are turning “green” over the latest clean, renewable energy solutions provided by Texas companies. More than 7,500 Texans came to the Texas Hill Country last year to explore products and technology geared to sustainable green-living choices (including water conservation and rainwater collection); and larger crowds are expected this year at the 10th Annual Renewable Energy Roundup & Green Living Fair, at Market Square in downtown Fredericksburg, Texas.

The 10th Annual Renewable Energy Roundup & Green Living Fair features many of the growing number of Texas wide companies offering renewable energy and green living choices being sought by Texans across the state. Informative and entertaining, this year’s schedule includes: workshops; live music; kid’s learning activities; new Belgian beer & ales for sale; healthy cooking demos; and a natural, organic food café. The Roundup participants can explore sustainable energy solutions through a variety of activities, including interactive exhibits and demonstrations; dozens of practical and informative workshops; vehicle ride-and-drive; and more. This three-day event will showcase eco friendly products and renewable energy solutions that help preserve the environment while reducing carbon output.

“More than ever, people are looking for choices that are recyclable, renewable, and reusable. When options are available, people tend to lean towards a green lifestyle that is organic; healthy; sustainable; locally produced; energy efficient; and less toxic,” said Russel Smith, Executive Director of the Texas Renewable Energy Industries Association and co-organizer for the Renewable Energy Roundup &
Green Living Fair. “The fair provides an outlet for community members to gain invaluable information and resources that can benefit our future quality of life.”

Nationally-recognized speakers will talk about the latest developments in green living, climate change research and renewable energy resources. Keynote speakers include: Friday Toby Hemenway, author of Gaia’s Garden, Saturday Karl Rabago, from Austin Energy and Sunday Bob Dixson, Mayor of Greensburg Kansas (the town devastated by a tornado in 2007). The speaker lineup will be rounded out with some fifty other experts in renewable energy research and development, and sustainable green living choices.

Event tickets for Friday and Sunday are $10 each. Saturday tickets are $12. A weekend pass can be purchased for $20 and children under 12 are free.

The Tenth Annual Renewable Energy Roundup is co-organized by the Texas Renewable Energy Industries Association (www.treia.org) and the Texas Solar Energy Society (www.txses.org), in cooperation with the Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (www.tofga.org). Event proceeds will benefit TREIA and TXSES, two non-profits that strive to increase the understanding and awareness of renewable energy applications and promote their wide use. Major sponsorship is provided by the Texas State Energy Conservation Office. Other top sponsors to date include Austin Energy Green Building Program, Austin Green Choice Program, and Habitat Suites. For more details log on to www.TheRoundup.org or call Laura Rice at 877-376-8638 or email roundup@txses.org. And, don’t hesitate to indicate if you’re interested in a group discount on tickets or getting exhibit space.

GARDEN-TO-GARDEN PLANT EXCHANGE
By Roxane Smith

On October 7, 2009, bring those summer survivors to the Fall plant exchange, to begin right after the October meeting. More details next month.
I’ve found a ton of great deals during my weekend garage sale adventures. But my pile of thrifty finds was getting out of control, so it was time to turn them into garden accents. A little whimsy in the garden is fun. Now, I know, some people don’t like whimsy in their gardens but I tend to go in the other direction. And since it’s too hot to plant anything (other than succulents and you’re taking your life in your hands to go outside to even do that) I’ve been working on a few projects which I thought I’d share.

Recently I made a water feature out of a galvanized livestock trough with an old bucket on top for the water to run through in hopes of attracting some more critters to my yard. It is in the shade but I’m still hoping to attract some frogs, toads and dragonflies. It has rocks all the way up the inside and outside to allow the critters to get in and out easily. So far I’ve only seen the neighborhood cat use it, but my hopes are still high.

I saw some “garden totems” on a garden blog and had to try making a few. This was so easy and can be done inside (except the part where you hammer the rod in the ground). Just get some glass pieces and glue them together. I used aquarium glue but I’m sure there are tons of other glues that would work. I love how it catches the light.

These glass flowers will bloom all year and add interest to your garden. Just drill a hole in your glass plates, cups or whatever strikes your fancy and attach them to a rod as a stem. I used copper pipe but you could use anything that you can drill a hole through. I love the sparkle in the garden from the glass. One of my favorite quotes is “I was going to save the world today but something sparkly caught my eye.” I don’t remember who said it but I so relate.

Another fun way to use old dishes is to paint a “Garden” sign on old plates or you could paint a quote or poem on one or more or just your initial. This is a great way to use plates that are chipped or cracked. I just used glass paint and made up a stencil and hung these on the back fence. I think it adds an inviting touch.

This last project I’ll share is one I thought would take an afternoon to complete not knowing you need a Masters from M.I.T. to figure out how to put it together. I’ve been contemplating making a clay pot dog for years. I tend to collect projects, you know, buy all the stuff needed to make them and then it sits for years while I buy more stuff for more projects. However, I managed to convince two friends that we should get together for a “craft” day and just whip these puppies out. Not being the type of person who uses instructions, I didn’t even look for any online.
Luckily (I think) my friends are and found instructions stating we need to weld iron pieces together to assemble our dogs. My plan going in was just to use stiff wire and glue and let the pots hold the dog’s body up. I was vetoed on this endeavor. So there we were in 105+ degree stifling heat on a concrete driveway trying to figure out how to weld the metal to put these clay pot dogs together. Now, I have to say at my age I’m lucky to put an outfit together let alone figure out how to make clay pots look like a dog. After two days of wrangling with metal and wire and clay pots and two trips to the store the dog cat was finally finished. Yes, I decided while cutting ears out of a clay pot that wasn’t working too well to turn mine into a cat. If anyone has ever done these I would love to hear your story. I have to say, even though I like the finished product, I will never make another one.

Escape the scorching sun and make some garden whimsies for your yard. We’d love to see your creations, so please show them off in the next newsletter.

Garden Trivia
And in case you thought it was hot here:
Highest USA temperature: 134°F / 56.7° C, Death Valley, California, 10 July, 1913
(neither 140° F / 60° C at Delta Mexico 8/1933 or 136.4° F / 58° C at San Luis Mexico, 8/11/1933 are internationally accepted)
Highest world temperature: 136° F / 58° C, Al Aziziyah, Libya, 13 September, 1922

In Closing

Ah, summer, what power you have to make us suffer and like it. ~Russel Baker
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