

Santa Fe Master Gardener Newsletter



In This Issue

Congratulatis to the Class of 2011	1
Message From the President	2
Remembering the Weather of 2011	3
Don't Forget the Birds!	5
Meet a Master Gardener	6
Snowy Surprise	7
Water Harvesting and Rain Barrel Workdhop	8
Calendar	10

Congratulations to the Class of 2011 Graduates

Beverly Adkins
Catherine Ashley
Nancy Balcer
Christine Baranowski
Douglas Bellrichard
Trixi Bubemyre
Joyce Dant
Jed Dean
Cynthia Demo
Christine Durlak
Mary Elliott
Karin Frost-Madrid
Maria Goldstein
Pamela Grob
Linda Harris
Betty Heald

Cindy Hoffman
Teresa Jones
Christine Keightley
Dottie Kelley
Carole Langrall
James Lodes
Linda Michael
Tim Michael
Suzanne Mohr
Diane Pratt
Jody Pugh
Patricia Reibel
Elizabeth Roghair
James Roghair
Carol Rose
Elizabeth Sternberg





Message from the President

February: The month of Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, and Mardi Gras--with The "Full Snow Moon" on the 7th. Have you noticed that the days are getting longer? But that can be deceiving. As my Grandma used to say, "As the days begin to lengthen, winter's grip begins to strengthen." It can be a cold month, but a good time to curl up with seed catalogs in front of a crackling fire with a warm drink and plan out your best garden ever! And it's also a good time to think about what SFMGA volunteer activities you'd like to be involved with. Project Leaders are busy working out the details of their activities, whether

it's at the Audubon Center, the Ask A Master Gardener tables that will be appearing around town, preparing for the Garden Fair (and fabulous Plant Sale and Garden Shed), the Xeric and Herb Gardens at the Fairgrounds, the Cornell Rose Garden, Eldorado Garden Tour, the Hotline, Habitat for Humanity, or our newest, a Landscape Improvement Project for a local church.

This year, all members and interns will be expected to complete 30 volunteer hours in three categories:

- **Organizational Support (20 Hours):**

We have combined what was formerly called "Hands On" with "Organization" hours. There will still be plenty of good old-fashioned garden work to do as well as planning and coordinating activities--all are now part of "Org Support". Members can get their hours by working hands on at such projects as Audubon, volunteering for the Garden Fair, or writing for the newsletter.

- **Public Education (6 hours)**

Formerly called "Public Contact", this category represents our direct interaction with the public such as the Ask A Master Gardener (AAMG) tables, the Hotline (by phone or computer), or by being a docent at the Eldorado Garden Tour. Any Public Education hours over 6 hours can be rolled over into Organizational Support. Public Education is central to our mission, and these are great opportunities to share your gardening knowledge with others.

- **Continuing Education (4 hours)**

There is always something new to learn when it comes to gardening. The Education Committee will be offering a number of interesting topics for members throughout the year. Those and the Extension Agent-approved classes at other venues, such as the Railyard Park, Alcalde Agricultural Research Station, and Santa Fe Greenhouse will help keep us learning and growing.

The category names may have changed, but our mission is the same: to learn, teach and promote locally sustainable gardening through reliable, current, research-base practices.

I'll see you in the garden!

Bob Zimmerman

2011 Monthly Weather Summary

Month (2011)	High Temp	Date	Low Temp	Date	Average Temp	Long-term Average Temp	Precip	Average Precip	Precip Dept
1	60	1/17/2011	0	1/1/2011	31.50	32.00	0.02	0.61	-0.59
2	67	2/19/2011	-18	2/3/2011	31.00	36.50	0.20	0.55	-0.35
3	74	3/31/2011	14	3/5/2011	45.50	43.00	0.07	0.91	-0.74
4	80	4/2/2011	22	4/4/2011	52.00	50.00	0.34	0.72	-0.38
5	90	5/28/2011	21	5/3/2011	56.50	59.50	0.04	0.94	-0.90
6	97	6/24/2011	41	6/12/2011	71.00	68.50	0.02	1.11	-1.09
7	96	7/8/2011	54	7/4/2011	76.00	73.00	2.19	1.76	0.43
8	95	8/7/2011	54	8/14/2011	75.00	70.50	1.22	2.60	-1.38
9	90	9/1/2011	44	9/18/2011	64.50	64.00	1.12	1.63	-0.51
10	80	10/16/2011	27	10/28/2011	52.50	52.50	1.89	1.35	0.54
11	67	11/1/2011	16	11/3/2011	39.50	40.00	0.34	0.68	-0.34
12	54	12/31/2011	-3	12/6/2011	27.50	31.50	1.10	0.77	0.33
					Average	Average	Total	Total	Total
					51.88	51.75	8.55	13.63	-4.98

Remembering the Weather of 2011

Tim Michael

Who can forget the cold night of February 3 when the temperature dropped to 18 degrees below zero? But how many recall that three days later the high was 60°F and on February 19th the high was 67°F? Do we need more evidence than an 85-degree temperature variation in one month to be convinced that we live in a land of extremes?

Monthly weather statistics for 2011 are summarized in the table above. Considering each month, January temperatures were close to long-term averages or normals, and there was almost no snow. February temperatures were barely on the charts, with a low of -18°F that set a record for the month. Almost all of the early-season snow, nearly three inches, fell in February. March and April temperatures were near normal, with a little snow in March

cont. on page 4

Remembering the Weather—cont. from page 3

and a little rain in April. That was about it for precipitation (a total of about 0.7 inches) until July. May temperatures were a slightly cooler than normal, with the last freeze on May 20. The June high temperature was 97°F, and temperatures were above 95°F for most of the last week. July and August temperatures averaged higher than normal, but more importantly, there was rain, with more than 2 inches falling in July. Rain continued into October, and the first freeze was on October 27. November temperatures were near normal with a little precipitation. In December, 13 inches of snow provided more than an inch of precipitation. Average December temperatures were below normal, although the thermometer reached 54°F on the last day of the month.

The most important story of 2011 was the lack of moisture. Precipitation was in the range of eight or nine inches, less than two-thirds of the normal of 14 inches. The National Weather Service described our area as being in severe to moderate drought conditions for the entire year – the result of low precipitation and warm and dry spring and summer winds.

Weather Information Sites

The data in the table is from AccuWeather (<http://www.accuweather.com/>), and the historical data specifically is from AccuWeather Premium, which requires a monthly payment. The AccuWeather location is identified as SANTA FE, NM [SAF], near the airport. Historical data is available at no charge from Weather Underground (<http://www.wunderground.com/>). The Weather Underground station location is described as Santa Fe (KSAF). Historical data from this site are generally easier to import into a spreadsheet than data from AccuWeather. Weather Underground data is not exactly the same as AccuWeather data. For example, Weather Underground shows the low temperature in February 2011 to be -16 (compared to -18), and the annual precipitation to be 7.84 inches (compared to 8.55 inches).

Mission Statement:

The Santa Fe Master Gardener Association is a non-profit volunteer organization whose mission is to learn, teach, and promote locally sustainable gardening through reliable, current research-based practices

Don't Forget the Birds!

Chris Durlak

Now that the holidays have passed, and we have “settled in” for a while, please don't forget that the birds that winter in our area still need our attention. The weather most definitely affects when each kind of bird (as well as other creatures) arrive at different locations, including our bird feeders.

Remember that our gardens are sources of food for the birds and when it snows and our shrubs and trees are snow-covered, the natural food sources are also covered. When it is cold birds need more calories to keep warm and survive (just like us!), therefore it is important that we uncover the bushes and branches, remove the snow, and allow the berries and seed heads to show so the birds can access them. Ice is particularly difficult for birds, since it coats branches and prevents the birds from getting food. When ice storms occur, if you can't get to your shrubs and plants, maybe then is the time to place a suet cake or extra seed on the ground so the birds don't go hungry. If you have bird feeders, this is the time to remember to keep them full.

And PLEASE don't forget water! We all think that as the snow melts, the birds and animals have water, but it is not enough. Birds need to bathe as well as drink, and a water source will help them do so. Though we'd like to think so, spring is not here yet--please don't forget the birds!

Reference:

Wild Birds Unlimited Website: www.wbu.com/education.



Meet a Master Gardener: Jannine Cabossel

Alice Lee

Who holds the New Mexico records for the largest pumpkin (448 lbs), the largest zucchini (62 lbs) and the giant green squash (340 lbs)? Our own Santa Fe Master Gardener, Jannine Cabossel, that's who.

Going on her third year in SFMGA, Jannine teaches the class on vegetable gardening to new intern Master Gardeners. She has held many positions since joining SFMGA, among them, as Director-at-Large on the Board of Directors, Project Leader for the Herb Garden (with Janet Hirons), Newsletter Graphic Designer, Operations Manager for the 2011 Garden Fair, and several others.



Jannine is known as the “Tomato Lady” at the Santa Fe Farmer’s Market, where she sells many varieties of heirloom tomatoes. You can also find Jannine at work at her studio; she is a professional fine arts glass blower. Her work can be found in 25 galleries across the country. This multi-talented woman is also a musician (percussion instruments), an avid fly fisher, and she tries to get out in nature “as much as possible.”

Asked what she likes about gardening, Jannine answers, “Everything!” Gardening feeds her soul. She adds “I like to make things beautiful, whether creating my art or creating a garden.” Her advice to others is, “become a Master Gardener. You make friends and learn a whole lot more than you could on your own.” Jannine enjoys sharing her knowledge and experiences in helping the gardening community here in Santa Fe, adding that “it’s important to give back.”



SNOWY SURPRISE

Carole Langrall

Wintertime in Santa Fe can feel like an eternity. When the holiday amaryllis and paper whites die, we may find ourselves longingly sneaking peaks at the garden, dreaming of new beginnings and blooms.

Fortunately, we don't have to wait too long as there is a late winter, early spring perennial that is about to raise its delicate, snowy head: the *Galanthus nivalis*, also known as the common Snowdrop.

Snowdrops are the garden's first creamy, white flowers that sprout in February and March, although milder winters may see them in late January. Each stem has three small internal petals that are surrounded by three larger external petals. Cold hardy and diminutive, they typically grow no taller than eight inches with an average height of five inches, just enough to peak out from beds of snow.

From the amaryllidaceae family, snowdrops are a genus of about 20 species, with the most common being the *nivalis*. They prefer moist soil, not always easy to find in New Mexico. But, if you plant them under trees or shrubs that have compost- rich soil, (Yum Yum Mix works well), they should adapt and flourish. Planting them in groups is preferable; they do best when you regularly add moisture to the soil during the fall, winter and spring months.

David Salman of Santa Fe Greenhouses recommends planting snowdrop bulbs in flower beds along walls that face the east or north. They do better in the ground than in containers. If your soil is dry or rocky, Salman discourages planting them.

A native of Switzerland, Austria and Southern Europe, snowdrops have an interesting history. In biblical times, the snowdrop was believed to be the first flower. Upon being exiled from the Garden of Eden, an angel came to comfort Eve, caught a snowflake and breathed life into it as it fell to the ground. There it bloomed into a flower, giving birth to the meaning of Hope.

Symbolizing hope, purity and consolation, the honey-scented snowdrop is the flower for those born in January.

Water Harvesting and Rain Barrel Workshop

Jannine Cabossel

I went to the workshop on January 14th and wanted to share what we learned.

There are two types of water harvesting techniques: passive techniques like building swales and depressions around your property to collect water, or active techniques such as the use of tanks, cisterns and rain barrels to collect rain.

We learned how to figure out how much rain we could collect off our roofs. The formula is easy: roof square feet x 0.623 gallons x inches of rain. For example: 2000 sq ft roof x 0.623 gal = 1246 x 0.5" (inches of rain) = 623 gallons of collectable rain. We also learned about rain gutter baskets that keep leaves out of the barrel.

The second half of the workshop was on how to build our own rain barrel. First we started with some food grade 55-gallon barrels donated by Coca Cola.

Materials:

- (1) Barrel
- (1) ¾ inch bronze or brass water faucet
- (1) ¾ inch plastic hose to pipe fitting
- (2) ¾ inch flat rubber washers
- (2) ¾ inch galvanized metal washers
- (1) Short hose

Tools:

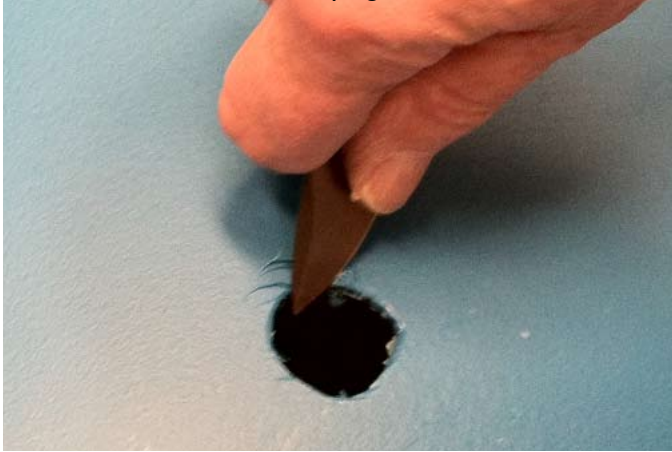
- 3-inch hole saw (optional)
- Drill
- 7/8 inch drill bit/router
- Pliers
- Waterproof sealant-Marine glue



1. Put barrel on its side and measure about 3 inches up from the bottom. Drill a hole with your 7/8" bit. Make sure you drill straight up and down (no angle). When the faucet is attached to the bottom of the barrel, there should be enough room to attach a hose and still have the barrel sit flat.

cont. on page 9

Rain Barrels—cont. from page 8



2. Take a knife and ream out the hole--beveling it a little wider on the top. Screw the faucet into the hole to start the threads then back it out to make it easier to screw back in later.



3. Put marine glue around the hole. Put the 3/4-inch rubber washer on barrel and then the metal washer on top over the hole. **Make sure the rubber washer is on the bottom and the metal washer is on top.** Screw the faucet back into the hole. The faucet will cinch down on the metal gasket and tighten the rubber gasket against the barrel. The hole should be very snug or it will leak. Use pliers to screw it down tightly.



4. Drill a 7/8" hole 2 inches from the top for the overflow hose. Repeat steps 2-6 but insert the 3/4" black plastic pipe-to-hose fitting through this hole.

cont. on page 10

Rain Barrels—cont. from page 9



5. The 3/4 black hose to pipe fitting has small threads on one side and large threads on the other side for the hose to attach. Screw the small threads into the hole at top of barrel.



6. There are several ways to collect the rainwater.

- Position it under a downspout or canale where the water flow can be directed into the barrel.
- Use a rain chain to direct water into the barrel
- Use downspout adapters. The top of the barrel will most likely have a small covered hole that can accommodate the downspout adapter but if not you can drill a 3" hole on the top. You can also cut holes to fit a basket that fits in the barrel.

7. Put the rain barrel onto a base or cinder blocks where it will be level. It should be high enough to accommodate a pail or hose.

8. Empty the barrel at the end of season and leave the faucet open so water will not freeze in it.

Calendar of Events

The detailed list of Continuing Education classes can be accessed at <http://www.sfmga.org/ContinuingEducation.html> and the Master Gardener classes at <http://www.sfmga.org/EventsCalendar.html>.

February 2012

- 4 Tips and Tricks for Vegetable Gardening (2CE)
Jannine Cabossel 10-2 Fairgrounds
- 4 Harvest the Rain (1CE) www.sfgh.com
- 6/7 Master Gardening Class #1
- *7 NOTE CHANGE OF DATE: Board Meeting 5:30 MG Office (see below)**
- 11 Fruit and Berries in NM Gardens (1 CE) www.sfgh.com
- 13/14 Master Gardening Class #2
- 18 Public Education: Gardening 101
- 18 Feed Yourself, Family and Community (1CE) www.sfgh.com
- 23/24 Xeriscape Conference
- 25/26 Xeriscape Expo
- 14 Board Meeting
- 20/21 Master Gardening Class #3
- 21 HG349 Garden Superstars (1CE) www.sfcc.edu
- 25 Container Planting (1CE) www.sfgh.com
- 26 Pruning (2CE) 1-3 PM Rich Atkinson at the Audubon Center
- 27/28 Master Gardening Class #4
- 28 Hg354 Xeriscape Gardens (1CE) www.sfcc.edu

March 2012

- 5/6 Master Gardening Class #5
- 6 A Rose by Any Name is Easy to Grow (1CE) www.sfcc.edu
- 12/13 Master Gardener Class #6
- 13 Board Meeting 5:30 MG Office
- 19/20 Master Gardening Class #7
- 26/27 Master Gardening Class #8

***February Board Meeting Change of Dates**

The next SFMGA Board Meeting will be Tuesday, February 7 rather than February 14. This is a one-time only change. The meeting is at 5:30 in the Master Gardener Office at the Fairgrounds. All members are welcome to attend.



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