



GRIMES COUNTY MASTER GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 8, ISSUE VIII

IN THIS ISSUE

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**Texas AgriLife Extension**

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 Secretary: Sandra Curl

**Newsletter**

Editor: Nicky Maddams

Article submissions, photos and information due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month

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**Upcoming Events"**

August 1 12:00pm – 5:00pm Health and Safety Fair at the First Baptist Church in Navasota

August 14 9:00am Monthly Meeting  
 Joe Floyd will present "Moths"

September 11 Field Trip to Chappell Hill Lavender Farm (details to follow)

October 9 6:30pm Fall Social – home of Ann DeWitt; Potluck and BYOB

November 13 9:00am Monthly Meeting  
 Grace Smarsh will present "Bats"

December 7 Christmas Party at Martha's Bloomers



**Texas Superstars!**

What does it take to be a Superstar?



**Get to Know Your Fellow Master Gardeners!**

Visit with Helen Quinn and Kat McMullen



## August Vegetable Planting Guide

Plant today through -

- Aug 1 Eggplant\*\*, Melons, Okra, Peppers, Pumpkin and Tomatoes\*\*
- Aug 15 Cucumbers
- Aug 20 Sweet Corn
- Aug 20 Squash (Summer & Winter)
- Aug 20 Romaine Lettuce
- Aug 31 Peas (Southern, Edible Pod)

\*\* Use plants rather than seed

Use protective floating row cover to help reduce heat and viral infection, and also to provide a little shade to young plants.



A Monarch Tag & Release will be held at noon next to the learning center.

Located at the Walker County Extension location at: 102 Tam Rd, Huntsville, TX.



**HELEN QUINN**

**Where were you born and how long have you lived in Texas?**

London, England; 30 yrs this time around

**Where is the farthest you have traveled from Texas?**

New Zealand

**Where would you go on your dream vacation?**

Iceland.

**What is your favorite flower and tree? Do you grow them?**

Flower: Himalayan Poppy Tree: Sweet Chestnut Don't grow them, wish I could!

**Where is the prettiest garden you have ever been to and what made it so?**

Wakehurst Place, W. Sussex, England . History (16<sup>th</sup> c), plantings, landscaping, walled garden.

**What restaurant do you go to more than any other?**

Erick's Mexican

**What is your favorite season?**

Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall – wherever I'm at, I love them all!

**Why are you a Master Gardener or Intern?**

I was born gardening, in a country of gardeners, and wanted to learn more about gardening in this challenging area.

**What is the closest you have been to a natural disaster?**

When I was about 20 I was due to go to (then) Yugoslavia for a vacation. Three days before I was to fly out there I dreamed something told me not to go so I canceled. Two days later the town was destroyed by an earthquake. In September 2010 I was in Christchurch, NZ right after the main earthquake, and experienced heavy aftershocks.

**When was the last "back to nature" experience you have had?**

Clothing unnecessary (optional) bathing on beaches in Spain. Ditto at Hippy Hollow near Austin TX.

**Where would you like to go that is "off the beaten bath"?**

Nepal and the Himalayas

**What do you love the smell of?**

Freshly tarred roads, leather, sandalwood

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS! PLAN AHEAD FOR PLANT SALES

Two of our neighboring counties are holding their fall plant sales.

The **Montgomery County Master Gardener Association** holds three plant sales each year. The next plant sale is the 2012 Fall Plant Sale on Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>.

An informative Pre-Sale Program will be presented from 8:00am to 9:00am, with the sale following from 9:00am – 1:00pm.

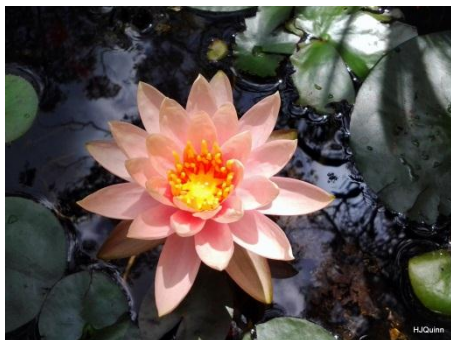
The Pre-Sale Program will be presented by Tom LeRoy, Montgomery County Horticultural Agent and will highlight the plants in the sale, plant selection and planting information.

The plants for sale are selected by Master Gardeners as plants that perform well in the Montgomery County area. These Master Gardeners will be on hand to provide information, answer questions, AND load your plants into your vehicle.

Located at the Montgomery Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe, TX.

Bring your own wagon – they do provide some, but often run short.

And the following weekend, our fellow Master Gardeners in Walker County are holding their Third Annual Butterfly Festival and Plant Sale on October 20, 2012 from 8:00am to 2:00pm.



This Comanche water lily is one of Helen's favorite things in her garden

**What is your favorite ice cream?**

Blue Bunny anything

**What chore do you absolutely hate doing?**

Anything called a chore.

**What electronic gadget could you not live without?**

Unfair question!!! You know I love my gadgets (electronic and canine) – if it came down to keeping one thing it would probably have to be my camera.

**Are you a social butterfly or do you prefer solitary endeavors?**

About mid-way but enjoy both.

**Name one wonderful childhood memory involving gardening.**

Planting snowdrops on my pet bunny's grave and watching them bloom the next spring.

**What would you say is your garden style? (Country, cottage, formal, sculptural, etc.)**

I have no style. No, I have no particular garden style!! I plant what I want, where I want. I mix colors and plant flowers with vegetables and herbs. My style has to be dog, bird and butterfly friendly and provide food for me too! I'd really rather not have mosquitoes, fire ants and weeds, but I suppose they are all there for a purpose too!



**LOOKING TO LEARN MORE OR REVIEW WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW?**

A free workshop entitled Gardening 101 is being offered in Brazos County on August 21 from 6:30pm - 8:30pm at the Brazos Center, 3232 Briarcrest Drive, Bryan, TX.

**Dr. Joe Masabni:** The milder days of fall create an ideal gardening environment for both the vegetable garden and the gardener. This presentation will provide tips for preparing and planting a fall vegetable garden, with information on recommended vegetable varieties, suggestions for harvest and preparation, and organic techniques for soil building and pest control.

**CHECKLIST FOR AUGUST**

Trim off faded flowers on crape myrtles to encourage later re-bloom. The more modern hybrids of the old-fashioned *Lagerstroemia indica* and *L. faureii* have larger, more conspicuous panicles of flowers, but these often tend to turn to heavy seedpods which discourage reblooming later in the season. They can be cut off, if practical.

Evaluate the volume of water delivered from lawn sprinklers to ensure healthy, stress-free grass during the heat of the summer. One thorough watering which will deliver one inch of water at a time is better than several more shallow sessions. The amount of water available through flower bed sprinklers may be checked by placing several shallow pans among shrubs or flowers

Caladiums require plenty of water at this time of year if they are to remain lush and active until fall. Fertilize with 21-0-0 at the rate of one-third to one-half pound per 100 square feet of bed area, and water thoroughly.

Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off on major pruning from now until midwinter. Severe pruning at this time will only stimulate tender new growth prior to frost.

Sow seeds of snapdragons, dianthus, pansies, calendulas, and other cool-season flowers in flats, or in well-prepared areas of the garden, for planting outside during mid-to-late fall.

Plant bluebonnet and other spring wildflowers. They must germinate in late summer or early fall, develop good root systems, and be ready to grow in spring when the weather warms. Plant seed in well-prepared soil, one-half inch deep, and water thoroughly. Picking flowers frequently encourages most annuals and perennials to flower even more abundantly.

It is time to divide spring-flowering perennials, such as iris, Shasta daisy, oxeye, gaillardia, cannas, day lilies, violets, lirioppe, and ajuga.

Make your selections and place orders for spring-flowering bulbs now so that they will arrive in time for planting in October and November.

Don't allow plants with green fruit or berries to suffer from lack of moisture.

A late-summer pruning of rosebushes can be beneficial. Prune out dead canes and any weak, brushy growth. Cut back tall, vigorous bushes to about 30 inches. After pruning, apply fertilizer, and water thoroughly. If a preventive disease-control program has been maintained, your rose bushes should be ready to provide an excellent crop of flowers this fall.

It is not too late to set out another planting of many warm-season annuals, such as marigolds, zinnias, and periwinkles. They will require extra attention for the first few weeks, but should provide you with color during late September, October, and November.

Establish a new compost pile to accommodate the fall leaf accumulation.

*Dr. William C. Welch, Professor & Landscape Horticulturist, Texas AgriLife Extension Service*

*Deep summer*

*is when laziness*

*finds respectability*

~ Sam Keen



## TEXAS SUPERSTARS®

What does it take to be a Superstar®?

It isn't easy to become a Texas Superstar® plant. Only the toughest, most reliable and best-looking plants make the cut. Every plant earning the Texas Superstar® designation undergoes several years of extensive field trials by Texas AgriLife Research and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, both part of the Texas A&M System. They must be proven to be super-performing plants under Texas growing conditions. During the field trials, plants receive minimal soil preparation, minimal water and no pesticides. What does that mean to the average gardener? It means landscape success with beautiful, proven, Texas-tough plants.

**Sharon Murry** has written about these Texas Superstar® plants and this month we will feature: Hibiscus

Everyone loves the beautiful flowers of the hibiscus plant. Although the most common hibiscus is the tropical type, there are now three different varieties that have made the Superstar® list that are perennials and are cold hardy. Actually, these plants are herbaceous perennials, meaning their tops die down to the ground each winter, but new shoots will come back with lush growth when the soils warm up the following spring. They actually love the Texas heat and drying winds.

These highly recommended cultivars are 'Flare', 'Lord Baltimore' and 'Moy Grande'. The 'Flare' is a rose mallow with large, showy fuchsia colored flowers. It is in almost constant bloom from summer till frost.



It was bred by Dr. Sam McFadden of Somerville, Texas and will tolerate alkaline soils. The 'Lord Baltimore' variety is a rose mallow with stunning saucer like red flowers that will also bloom summer till frost. It prefers a neutral to acid soil.

We all know the saying that "everything is bigger in Texas!" This is certainly true of the third Hibiscus Superstar®, Moy Grande (Texas Giant Hibiscus). This rose mallow has been said to have the largest flowers of any hardy perennial and may be considered the largest flowering hibiscus on earth. It has giant pink blossoms that can get as large as dinner plates, 12 inches across! It will bloom summer till frost. They were originally sold as The Mallow Marvels because of their continuing display of summer color.

Ying Doon Moy, a research and development horticulturist at the San Antonio Botanical Center cross-bred a *Hibiscus moscheutos* hybrid with *Hibiscus grandiflorus* to create the largest, open-face hibiscus flower in the world. The offspring was superior to either parent and produced the 'Moy Grande'. All three of these Superstar® Hibiscus prefer sunny locations with well-drained soil and plenty of organic matter.

They will tolerate some shade. All three are cold hardy to Zone 5 and would be a show stopper in your landscape. To promote re-blooming, remove old blooms and seed pods. For magnificent blooms year after year with very little care, you can't go wrong with a Texas Superstar® Hibiscus in your landscape.

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN STUDY SERIES

Mrs. Nell Zeigler of Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. and Dr. William C. Welch announces the first in the latest Landscape Design Study Course series (Landscape Design School) which is offered in four separate schools, approximately six months apart, each with 10 hours of instruction, in the Bryan-College Station area.

These courses offer an opportunity to learn from professional landscape architects and horticulturists about how successful landscapes are designed. Specifics include color, scale, history, practicality, plant selection and hardscape choices. We believe that good landscapes reflect a "sense of place" and the

application of good design principles. Participants may take the four courses in any sequence. Garden Club members, Master Gardeners, nurserymen and others who are interested in furthering their knowledge of landscape design are welcome to attend.

**Master Gardeners** who complete a course may apply 12 hours of credit to their requirements for continuing education.

For more information, please refer to the TMGA newsletter or go online at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/LDSep12/>



KAT MCMULLEN

**Where were you born and how long have you lived in Texas?**

I was born in Texas and have lived here for most of my life; I have also lived in Chile and in Yorkshire, England.

**Where is the farthest you have traveled from Texas?**

Bangalore, India, is the farthest I've ever traveled from Texas. They had something like a thirteen hour time difference.

**Where would you go on your dream vacation?**

I would love to go back to England, or go for the first time to Canada, Hawaii, or Israel.

**What is your favorite flower and tree? Do you grow them?**

I love pansies, roses, plumerias and pecan trees, but alas! For the moment, I am in an apartment without a good yard.



*Kat loves tropical flowers like this Bird of Paradise!*

**Where is the prettiest garden you have ever been to and what made it so?**

That's a tough question. Probably the Sheffield Botanical Garden in Yorkshire was one of the loveliest gardens I've ever seen. I enjoyed going there when I needed to think.

**What restaurant do you go to more than any other?**

Subway. I almost always order a six-inch wheat with tuna and American cheese, toasted, with all of the vegetables except for banana peppers or jalapeños, and a little bit of mayo for good measure.

**What is your favorite season?**

Autumn, hands down. Spring almost ties it, but in Texas, it seems like spring is only about a week long.

**Why are you a Master Gardener or Intern?**

I wanted to be a Master Gardener because I love gardening and I love learning, and let's be honest- it sounds pretty cool. I am really looking forward to putting this knowledge to good use in my own yard one day.

**What is the closest you have been to a natural disaster?**

I have been in an earthquake and in hurricanes, and I think, tornados, too, but to me, the weirdest thing was having to follow the smoke and drive into the Dyer Mills fire area last year as part of my job as a reporter.

**When was the last "back to nature" experience you have had?**

I battled a scorpion to the death in the shower the other night. It was Man versus

Arthropod, no bells, no whistles, no clothing. Does that count?

**Where would you like to go that is "off the beaten path"?**

Hm. If I were going to go "off the beaten path," I think it would be a nice bubble bath in a Jacuzzi. ;) If you meant "path," there is a camp I love in Marble Falls called Camp Peniel, and I always love to go there. It just takes so long to drive there.

**What vegetable do you hate?**

The only vegetables that, to my knowledge, I really just don't enjoy, are beets and the afore-mentioned banana peppers. I probably should give them another chance one of these days. I really don't enjoy hot peppers, but it's not the pepper flavor itself, necessarily- I just don't like especially piquant things. They make my lips peel.

**What do you love the smell of?**

I love the smell of limes, and gardenias.

**What is your favorite ice cream?**

Chocolate, coffee, cookies-and-cream, chocolate chip cookie dough, and Baskin Robbins' Jamoca Almond Fudge. All have their appropriate time and place. And I really love ice cream sandwiches and those nutty cone things, but I'm always disappointed if there isn't any chocolate in the bottom of the cone.

**What chore do you absolutely hate doing?**

I really don't like vacuuming at all, but I enjoy doing and folding laundry, I enjoy making beds, and I sometimes enjoy washing the dishes. Maybe I just need to figure out a better vacuuming technique.

**What electronic gadget could you not live without?**

Probably a computer. Or electric beaters. In my opinion, there's nothing quite as lame and time-consuming, culinarily speaking, as trying to make meringue by hand-beating the egg whites with a whisk.

**Are you a social butterfly or do you prefer solitary endeavors?**

I like being with a small to large group of people that I love. I thought I was an introvert, but I've been living alone for almost two years (which I hate) and now I think that I might be an extrovert, or at least borderline.

**Name one wonderful childhood memory involving gardening.**

I loved being in my Grammie's garden in North Carolina and looking at all her beautiful irises and lilies.

**What would you say is your garden style? (Country, cottage, formal, sculptural, etc.)**

Probably cottage or country. Not country as in western, but country as in rustic.

*Do you receive the Texas Master Gardener Association Newsletter? It contains lots of valuable information regarding specialist training, the International MG Conference (it's a cruise!), events happening in other counties, etc. Check it out!*

*Sign up at:  
<http://txmg.org>  
and click on the Newsletter signup link*

**AGENDA ITEMS**

If you would like to see something on the agenda for next month's Master Gardener meeting, please submit to Jennifer Corzine by August 12, 2012 so that time can be allowed for discussion.

**PHONE NUMBER CHANGES:**

The new extension phone numbers are:

MG Desk: 936-825-0140

Sandra: 936-825-0465

Flora: 936-825-0497

Latisha: 936-825-0468