



HOE! HOE! HOE!

Grimes County Master Gardeners Newsletter

*Winner of the Texas Master Gardener Association
2nd Place Newsletter Award 2006*

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1, January, 2011

Officers, 2011

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Class: Jennifer Corzine
Painting Texas w/wildflowers: Edmond McGee
Co-op: Fred Vesperman

Texas AgriLife Extension:

Shane Jennings: MG Coordinator
Sandra Curl: Secretary

Newsletter Editor:

Helen Quinn
Articles, photos and other
Information due by 27th of each month.
Send to:

hortiq@gmail.com

Website:

txmg.org/grimes
grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com



December Stars – Kathy, Barbara, Mike, Connie and Janeth (not in photo) became the newest certified Master Gardeners!



GCMG in Navasota Christmas Parade



VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE

JANUARY PLANTING

12/20 – 3/5 Carrots
1/15-3/15 – Asparagus
1/5-3/5 – Beets
1/20-3/5 – Broccoli
1/1-3/15 – Garlic
1/20-3/10 - Kale
1/20-3/10 – Kohlrabi
1/20-3/15 – Lettuce (head)
1/15-3/20 – Lettuce (leaf)
1/20-4/15 – Mustard
1/20-2/20 – Spinach
1/15-4/20 – Turnips
1/15-2/5 – Onions (plants)
1/20-2/20 – Peas (English)
1/25-3/5 Peas (Edible Pod)
1/25-5/5 – Radish



Have you made your seed selections from the catalogs yet? Try something new - ALWAYS try something new! If you don't have enough garden space with full, or almost full sun, don't be afraid to dig up some lawn and turn it over to vegetables. After all, that will only mean less grass to cut! Some of my choices for this year are : Lettuce "Healing Hands", Zucchini "Ball Mix", Cucumber "Bush Champion", Habanero "Hot Caribbean Red", Cayenne "Hot Long Red Slim", Bell Pepper "Sweet Carnival Mix", Basil "Summerlong" and "Lime", and Fennel "Orion Hybrid". As they are all new to me, this is not a recommendation!!!

One of the major seed companies is offering plants of the only known black petunia – imagine what this would look like massed with the violet/purple edged with lime green Picasso petunia! As usual, there are lots of new introductions for the New Year, so let's try some!

Hot news in England is that they are now starting "Master Gardener" groups there. An organization at Ryton Gardens in Warwickshire, Garden Organic, is training volunteers, each of whom agrees to inspire and support ten households to grow their own organic vegetables over a 12 month period. The Three year pilot program is in full swing in four areas. This project follows the success of the Not-for-Profit organization's "Master Composter Network", which now has 500 volunteers across the U.K. Some of the families learning through the volunteers have their own garden plots, and many of them rent "allotments" on publicly-owned land.



ON THE CALENDAR January/February 2011

- Jan 11 GCMG Reg. Monthly Meeting – Go Texan Building, followed by pot luck lunch & work afternoon, weather permitting.
- Feb 08 GCMG Reg. Monthly Meeting – note probable time change due to conflict with class. Stay tuned!

2011 Training Classes at Go Texan Building, 8.30 – 12.30

- | | | |
|--------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Jan 18 | Jayla Fry | MG Program/EarthKind Landscaping |
| Jan 25 | Martin Thomas | Landscape Horticulture |
| Feb 01 | Sam Feagly | Soil, Water & Plant Nutrients |
| Feb 08 | Lisa Whittlesey | Plant Growth & Development |
| Feb 15 | Ann Wheeler | Herbs |
| Feb 22 | Carlos Bogran | Plant Health |

Remaining Training Classes :

- | | | |
|--------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mar 01 | Bart Drees | Entomology |
| Mar 08 | Tom Leroy | Home Fruit & Nut Production |
| Mar 15 | Tom Leroy | Vegetable Gardening |
| Mar 22 | David Chalmers | Lawn Care/Turf Grasses |
| Mar 29 | Helen Quinn/Sandra Williams | Propagation |
| Apr 05 | Robert & Sandra Stuckey | Rainwater Harvesting |
| | Sharon Murry | Composting |
| Apr 12 | Shane Jennings | Communications |
| | GCMGs | Open discussion |

Be watching in the media and online for all kinds of plant sales and seminars starting in February and March, and don't forget if you are a Certified Master Gardener or Intern, you are eligible to receive a 10% discount on plants at Martha's Bloomers and Coufal-Prater. As more retailers offer discounts, we will notify you. New cards will be issued as soon as you have paid your dues, so bring your check or cash to the January meeting, or mail them in. Many out-of-town plant nurseries offer discounts, so be sure to ask when making a purchase!

Regular meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Go Texan Building, Grimes Co. Fairgrounds, 9.00 am., except as noted below. Two field trips are planned annually, and two evening meetings held at members' homes to enable members who work to participate.

REMINDER: DUES FOR CERTIFIED MASTER GARDENERS WILL BE DUE IN JANUARY – PLEASE BRING YOUR \$18 TO THE JANUARY MEETING.



Swap Your Favorite Seeds

Submitted by Connie Arden

National Seed Swap Day falls on January 31 each year, and though it might seem like an outdated day observed by farmers, there are plenty of reasons why you should get in on the action.

Whether you love tending to flowers in the garden or have a vegetable patch in your yard, seed swapping is a fantastic idea. Many of us routinely plant those flowers and foods we know well, but your friends and neighbors may grow a plant you've never heard of....or one that you might come to cherish. By swapping seeds, you'll discover new flowers or try new foods, such as usual heirloom varieties, plus you'll help improve the biodiversity of your garden, which is always a good thing.



CELEBRATE SEEDS

Bring a packet of commercial or saved seeds to the January meeting to swap with someone.

Let's start a seed bank to share with people in underdeveloped countries such as The Dominican Republic.

Make 2011 the year to start at least 50% of your plants from seed.

WHAT WE DO WHEN WE'RE HAVING FUN!!

ONGOING PROJECTS:

- *Rose beds and landscaping at Go Texan Building, Fairgrounds.
- *Landscaping at Texas Agri-Life Extension Office.
- *Painting Texas with Wildflowers
- *Main Street Anderson Beautification



At each meeting there will be a suggestion box available for your ideas on programs, projects, field trips, what you like about GCMG and what you don't like.

We also participate in once-a-year activities such as Farm Bureau Ag Day, Senior Day and horticulture judging at the County Fair, Boy Scout programs, Courthouse rose beds.

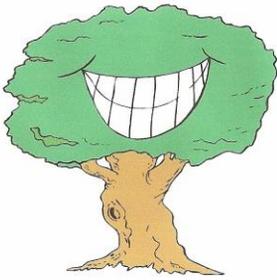
We have a dedicated email address for gardening questions from the public, and a Panel of volunteers to answer the questions:

grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com



"We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses."

Abraham Lincoln



SMILE GARDEN

Submitted by Connie Arden

Smiling is the beginning of laughter.....plant some smile seeds to grow into laughter and reap blossoms of positive physical, mental, and social benefits.

January is still flu season. Take care of yourself and avoid a visit to..... (answer below)



Dr. Pepper



“Bring back the Monarchs” campaign.

Monarch Watch, started in 1992 as an outreach program to engage the public in the studies of monarchs, is now concentrating on monarch conservation. Development is consuming 6000 acres a day, 2.2 million acres per year. Over-use of herbicides and adoption of genetically modified soybeans & corn have further reduced monarch habitat.

Our Community Garden, now under the new City Hall building in Navasota, was a Certified Monarch Waystation. Perhaps we can start another somewhere, some day.

For more information check [BringBackThe Monarchs.org](http://BringBackTheMonarchs.org)

DROUGHT – submitted by Carolyn Guillotte

My grandfather was born in 1873. As a boy he saw Geronimo and he lived to see a man land on the moon. He had many stories to tell about the Indian raids, hardship, his beloved grandmother who was called a “doctor” and our family. But, the one recurring theme was about the horrible droughts that he lived through. My grandfather told me about the community climbing up to the cross on the hill, outside of Castroville, praying for rain. He and my mother talked about the Great Depression combined with the horrible drought. I personally lived through the horrible drought in the 50s, a time when the neighbor’s cattle died and we kept blasting our well deeper and deeper in an attempt to have sufficient water. Short and long droughts have become a part of my history and my life.

So, the question is, how do we intelligently live through these droughts? Some say that we should use as little water as possible. I agree to a point. The point being that when we allow a great pecan tree, or other food source, to die we have gone too far. We must have water and we must have food. Thus, we must use our water resources in an intelligent manner.

Additionally, we “must” find a way to intelligently keep other plant life, especially trees, alive as plants are a source of water. Plants through a process called transpiration send out water vapor through small pores present on the leaf surface. The added water vapor in the atmosphere leads to precipitation in the form of rain.

We must build water holding facilities that range from a simple barrel to collect rain water to great reservoirs to catch the water before it arrives at the ocean and is turned to salt water. We must, in a safe manner, use gray water both in our homes and in our municipalities to water gardens and lawns. Our gardens must include xeriscape and permaculture practices.

When my grandfather was a boy a drought was a very serious matter. Today, with the increasing population, it could become a matter of life and death.