



MG Grapevine

NOTICE
April 1st
MG Association
Meeting at the Rose
Garden Center
11:30 AM

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Keith's Column - pg. 2
- What is This? - pg. 2
- Hummingbirds - pg. 2
- Executive Committee - pg. 3
- Tomato Growing 101 - pg. 3
- Speaker's Bureau - pg. 3
- Coffee Walking - pg. 4
- Nursery Hopping - pg. 4
- Coming Events - pg. 5
- Texas Nature Trackers - pg. 5

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Monthly Meeting Notes

Please join us for the annual Graduation & awards Luncheon on April 1st at the Rose Garden Center. Remember that it is potluck and this year the main dish is not catered. Spouses are welcome and encouraged to attend.



The members of Class 16 will be certified and we will get to visit with the new interns of Class 17. It is also the time for special awards and the White Elephant Garden Sale, so don't miss out! For those who have not had a chance to call in your sale items, feel free to bring them priced, to the luncheon Thursday. The sale will be after the luncheon.

If you have not signed up please e-mail Joanie Matthews at joanmatthews@msn.com or call 903-597-8716 and we'll save a place for you!

Meet Class 17

If you haven't met the members of the new class or if you want to make sure that you have the right name to go with the face, take a look on the SCMG website. Go to "What's New?" Their pictures and their names are all there.

Address Book 2010-2011

The new book will be available at the meeting on April 1st. Each Master Gardener and intern is encouraged to pick one up. Since there are a limited number of them, please take only one copy. For those not in attendance at the meeting, copies will be available at the MG office.

While every attempt has been made to have accurate information in the book, any mistakes should be reported to Martin Davis. Corrections will be published in the May *MG Grapevine*.

2010 Home Garden Tour

The 2010 MG Home Garden Tour is set for Saturday, May 1, 9 am– 4 pm. Six delightful homes—ranging from two cottage garden-style homes that feature native plants to a more formal tropical paradise and a rustic log cabin—spotlight a variety of landscaping styles and methods. Homeowners include Chuck and Boo Eubanks, Texanita Cole, Dr. Thomas and Cheryl Buzbee, Wayne and Vanette Boshears, Dr. T. H. and Elizabeth Holland, and Jim and Ann Powell.

In the Chapel Hill area, the large two-story **Eubanks** home features chiefly native plants and is certified as a Texas Wildscape by Texas Parks & Wildlife. True native plant enthusiasts, the Eubanks have clearly marked specimens to help educate visitors. A second garden East of Tyler in a gated community is the **Cole** garden, designed and maintained by former Master Gardener Texie Cole. The eclectic garden features roses, daylilies, columbine, larkspur and an amazing array of other perennials and annuals.

The **Buzbee** home can best be described as a tropical paradise. In addition to Japanese maples, azaleas and other flowering shrubs, the garden features myriad tropicals in containers, including more than a dozen colors of Plumeria. Water features include two fountains and a koi pond. The **Boshears** home features large beds with shade-tolerant shrubs that greet visitors in the front. A raised area curbed by a cross-tie retaining wall along the driveway is home to passion vines, as well as night-blooming moonflower plants and fragrant four o'clock that both reseed freely.

The **Holland** garden greets visitors with a curving front walkway enclosed with an iron fence. The back garden features a large area that slopes away from a southern screened porch and a wooden deck with an arbor covered with Lady Banksia rose.

See **HOME TOUR** page 3-----



Spring has finally arrived, though weekend's predicted freeze will be interesting. Fortunately the azaleas are still not blooming, so the flowers should be okay. Hopefully your flowers and foliage all came through without a scratch. The

cooler weather of late winter and spring slowed everything down, and it will be interesting to see how our gardening year progresses. Some plants may show latent freeze damage as they come out of dormancy. This could manifest itself as what initially appears as shoots growing normally for a short period of time, but when it gets hot, suddenly withering and dying. This can happen when the plant's vascular system was partially injured, but not severely enough to immediately die. This type of damage is more likely on semi- or marginally-hardy plants.

Class 17 has finished their training, and Class 16 is finishing up their initial volunteer efforts. What a great group of people I am privileged to work with and have supporting our Extension AgriLife educational programs! I look forward to seeing all of you April 1 at our annual celebration, graduation and luncheon.

As you continue your educational efforts in various projects, when asked, be sure to identify yourself as a Master Gardener, and let people know that the Master Gardener program is part of Texas AgriLife Extension Service, which offers educational programs in a very wide range of subjects and categories from health and wellness, youth

development, agriculture and natural resources, and of course, horticulture. You are ambassadors for our agency, and we appreciate all that you do for the people of Texas!

Be sure to stay involved, and don't wait 'till the last minute to get your hours for volunteering or recertification. There are so many great Master Gardener projects and activities going on, and I hope you find one or more that you enjoy. Expand your Master Gardener experience and consider getting involved in a project that is new to you. Meet the new interns and invite one to a project or committee meeting. Spread good, research-based gardening information, and most of all – HAVE FUN!

What is This?

It is the new tool shed being built in the Heritage Garden. Do you think the hole in the roof is so that God can watch his team, the SCMG Heritage Garden workers? Maybe not!

Photo & comment by
Martin Davis



Many Favorites of Hummingbirds

by Herb Coursey



My Dad *loved* hummingbirds! The first feeders I ever saw - red, of course - were hanging outside our kitchen window in a Citrus Thornbush - aka Bitter Orange - properly *Poncirus trifoliata*. Hummers seemed to prefer that location for feeding and even for some nesting, probably for safety from the family cat! [Citrus Thornbush is said to be used to ring nuclear missile silos in southern Missouri because its steel-hard dagger-like 3" thorns will keep out terrorists better than fences and razor ribbons!]

Down below were red turk's caps, an ideal food source: *Malvaviscus drummondii*. Malvaceae, one of Texas' best-loved and most used flowering ornamentals, will live almost anywhere: sandy low ground by streams, limestone slopes, even palm groves. It ranges from Florida through Texas to the West Indies, Mexico and Cuba. In the Valley, its 4- to 6-inch diameter leaves are evergreen, but in East Texas it dies to the ground as an herbaceous perennial that attains a maximum of 4 by 4 feet. Its vermilion red flowers are twisted into a tube showing extended red stamens protruding from the whorl. Though drought tolerant as far west as Midland, it also tolerates Houston's gumbo, and even does well in shade. There are white and variegated forms of bloom, but the best are the common red ones: "red'er'n Tabasco Sauce!" Dad used to say. The flowers are used in Mexico in a decoction to treat inflammation of the digestive tract and as a menstrual aid. Their marble-size red fruit is mealy but edible to other animals. But the flowers! Ah, the flowers! Hummers adore their nectar, as do some butterflies! Cattle will even browse the leaves. *Malvaviscus* is from a Greek word meaning "stickymallow." A few other favorites of Hummers are *Agastache* Hummingbird Mint, *Agave*, *Aquilegia* Columbines, *Asclepias* Orange Butterfly Weed, *Buddleia*, *Echinacea* Tiki Torch Coneflower, *Echinocereus* White Sands - a cactus that is very winter hardy in zone 7/8, *Gladiolus*, *Heuchera*, *Honeysuckle*, *Kniphofia* Red Hot Poker, *Monarda* Bee Balm, *Penstemon*, *Salvia*, *Scrophularia* Redbirds in a Tree, *Silene*, *Yucca* (all) especially Texas Red, and *Zauschneria* Hardy Hummingbird Trumpet. This list is compiled from the Spring 2010 catalog and handbook of www.highcountrygardens.com. Let's trust them!

Other sources cite: *Azalea*, *Acanthus* Flame, Flowering *Quince* (?), *Lantana*, *Mimosa* (?), *Weigela*, Cypress *Vine*, Morning Glory, Trumpet Vine, Four O'Clocks, *Hosta*, *Fuchsia*, *Impatiens*, *Petunia* ad infinitum ad nauseam.

Tips: Hummers, like all birds, have virtually no sense of smell, but are attracted to what they can see: RED. Then, they'll hang out there if the other nectars are good. Cultivated hybrid flowers dependably make much less nectar than wild strains. (Just try sniffing blooms from the florist!) If you use pesticides, you'll eliminate the small insects that Hummers rely on for protein. Furthermore, they may ingest thereby some pesticides sprayed on flowers which then sicken or kill birds. Use instead a soapy hard spraying, or Ultra-Fine Oil spray. Hummers spend about 80% of their time sitting on twigs, leaf stems, etc, with the rest on feeding and sorties against trespassing rivals. So use sugar water, at 4- to-1, boil 2 minutes, store cool. *Not honey!* They can't handle honey! But they're always hungry! A common conjecture is that, in a given year, not a square meter of the US or southern Canada goes unchecked by Hummers in their relentless quest for food - 'erb



The Executive Committee met on February 25th and considered the following:

- The SCMGA chartering letter has been received and filed.
- The association has 150 dues paying members and that total was submitted to the state association..
- With one exception, the job descriptions are now up-to-date.
- Over 600 calendars have been sold. By motion and vote, the price for further sales of the 2010 calendar has been reduced to \$5.00 each.
- “Thank you” letters have been sent to businesses which offered MG discounts last year, with requests that they continue the program again this year.
- Audit of the Treasurer's records has been completed by Ann Kelley and Judy Chance.
- The purchase of two styles of plant labels for sales to the public was approved.
- Keith Hansen will organize a committee to consider the MG Emeritus program for possible award at the December meeting.
- Tee shirts, with the SCMG logo on them, will again be made available with the addition of a windbreaker jacket.
- A report from the committee advised that the homes for the Home Garden Tour have been finalized.
- A bus trip to Chandor Gardens on May 12th has been scheduled. The cost will be \$30 per person.
- Victor Long commented that over \$1,000 has been spent on the new Heritage Garden tool shed and that work was progressing well.

NURSERY HOPPING continued from page 4-----

Dallas. My favorite three: SHADES OF GREEN --- Frisco. Just outstanding. BLOMMERS, Cedar Hill. Used to be King's Creek. A great source for Native Plants. North Haven Gardens--- A great source for herbs, perennials, and begonias.

Fort Worth. WESTON GARDENS off Anglin Drive off I-20. Randy Weston has several acres planted with the native plants he sells and I might add, beautifully landscaped. He specializes in native plants and tried and true perennials. Just remember that he caters to the alkaline blackland.

We here in east Texas. need to go east for our plants. Our soils and climate do not work for most of the plants sold in Dallas. Shreveport, and South Arkansas are our best sources. PITTMAN'S in Magnolia, Arkansas is a wonderful nursery. Take the Cotton Valley exit off I-20 and go straight up to Magnolia. It takes about 3 hours from here. Well worth the drive. Great products at great prices.

Ya'll have a great Nursery Hoppin' good time this spring.

Introducing Tomato growing 101



The best garden is a well planned garden, so while you wait for spring, get ready for the best tomato harvest by taking the new online course 'Tomato 101'.

This course teaches all aspects of growing tomatoes in a home garden, at your own pace and in your own home.

The course covers:

- Garden and soil preparation
- Plant selection and training
- Fertilization
- Irrigation
- Weed, disease and insect control
- General care

A short quiz at the end of each section lets you review what you learned before moving on, and at the completion of the course generates a certificate for you.

So get out from the rain, take a seat by your computer and dream about those summer tomatoes while you go through **Tomato 101**. Available at: <http://aglifesciences.tamu.edu/news/2-2010-tomato.php>

Speaker's Bureau

During February, Scherel Carver and Jana Bowman made presentations to an AAUW group and to the Hideaway Lake Garden Club. They talked about “Informal Flower Arrangements” and “Bringing the Outside in with a Terrarium” with a total of 29 people in attendance.



HOME TOUR continued from page 1-----

Some twenty beds fill the spaces surrounding the many pine trees, and shade-loving shrubs and perennials offer floral color throughout the year. The **Powell** garden covers some three acres surrounding a log cabin.

Addresses for each home will soon be available on the SCMG website.

Tour tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 the day of tour. Advance sales in Tyler are April 1–30 at Brookshires on Rice Road, Horaney's, Potpourri House, Rubicon, and in Chandler at Blue Moon Gardens. To order tickets, make checks payable to SCMG and mail to 14608 Foxwood Circle, Tyler, TX 75703.

Coffee Walking

by Anne Pattullo - President SCMG Association

The daffodils finally made it and they sure have been beautiful all around Tyler! Every time I go past a particularly pretty yard I wonder if the homeowners bought their bulbs from the Master Gardeners. I have been busy for the past month trying to figure out just what varieties I have. I was sure I would remember when I planted them and I even put markers around some, but the sun and rain have taken their toll and most I can no longer read. I am going to invest in some new wire labels available at the April Master Gardener White Elephant sale and write on them with a fine tip paint pen. I have included pictures of two that I am having trouble identifying. The white one is a tazetta type with a very small white cup. I got it from the IDEA garden when we divided a large clump and I brought some home to hold until the bulb sale. When bulb sale time came I couldn't remember what I had so I had to keep them another year to identify them. Whoever can help me, let me know. Nobody at the garden is sure what they are either. I promise to dig and put them in the sale come October if I can properly identify them. The yellow ones are short



clumps, only about 8-10 inches high. They are great multipliers and a very bright golden yellow. There may be one to three flowers on a stem. I am especially proud of my Butter and Eggs. The first year I had one bloom, the second year, two and this year four huge

flowers. Another one we sell that I can recommend is Cheerfulness. It looks like clusters of tiny white roses with a hint of bright orange at the very centers. I'm still waiting for the Hoop Petticoats and Geranium, a really late bloomer. Every morning Ellie and I go out to see if there is one that is new and different.

I want to thank everyone who has been working on all our projects and committees. The Home Tour is on target and ready to go. The calendar committee has already started on 2011 and we have had great volunteer response for our educational days at Camp Tyler and Caldwell Zoo. Volunteers are still needed to man the rainwater simulator on Sunday, April 18 at Camp Tyler for Earth Day. If we get 6 people we could have 3, two hour shifts.

The bus trip to Chandor Gardens is full. That will be a no work/all play day for us. Many of us are working the Main Street Flower Market this weekend (March 26-27), but



even if you aren't, please come out and enjoy the event. There will be vendors there with unique garden art and great plants. Of course, we will be selling roses provided by Mark Chamblee, as well as our books and plant labels. Spring is such a wonderful time, especially for gardeners.

Let's get the season off to a great start by attending our April 1st meeting/graduation luncheon. We will welcome our 18 new interns and congratulate our newly certified Master Gardeners! See you there!

Nursery Hopping

by Dee Bishop

NURSERY - HOPPING TIME - We have lots of nurseries in the area, but finding a really good one is not that easy. All nurseries are not created equal. I will list the ones I consider the best. I know some of you know of others that I haven't discovered yet. I am going to try to uncover them all this year so I can pass the info on to all of you.

BLUE MOON - I consider it one of the very best, but with the very highest prices too. If you want the newest perennials and don't mind paying the price, Blue Moon is your best place. Sharon and Mary are wonderful to try and get anything you want too.

HUGHES PLANT FARM - south on 69 about a mile south of hwy 346. It will be on your right. Hughes has the best prices of anyone around. They grow their own annuals, some perennials, and herbs. They grow some beautiful hanging baskets which they sell very reasonably. If you need soil amendments, they have good products at rock bottom prices. If you need help, forget it! They know how to grow plants, but know very little about how they do in the ground.

HIDDEN GARDENS - go south to Bullard turn right on FM 2493. It's down on the right. Terry Dunford has the nursery and he grows all his product. He sells some of the most beautiful baskets. His plants are good quality, and he always has a few new ones. His wife runs the tea room there and it is a fun place to eat lunch before shopping for plants.

RAMBLING ROSE NURSERY - also in Flint. Turn right on 346 and go zig-zagging through Flint, or come down Old Jacksonville to Flint and turn right on 346. The nursery is down on the right just beyond town (what town there is). This one is new. A couple opened 2 years ago and started out selling Knock-Out Roses. She is planning to have variety. They are really friendly people and I hope they get going big time.

You could easily take in all three of these in one swoop.

On to Longview. **SMOTHERMAN'S** - On the west end of old hwy. 80. This is one of the very best. They have a huge variety of shrubs, trees, perennials, and annuals. It is huge and there is so much, so don't go in a hurry.

On to Shreveport. **AIKENS**, A wonderful old nursery, expensive, but rewarding. They carry lots of neat perennials. When you drive up, you will be disappointed. There isn't much out front, it's all in the back.

See **NURSERY HOPPING**, page 3 -----



Main Street Flower Market
 Grounds of Goodman-LeGrand Museum
 March 26-27 10AM to 5 PM

First Tuesday in the Garden
 Ornamental Grasses - Dee Bishop
 April 6 - Noon



Garden Gala Day
 SFA State University - Nacogdoches
 April 17 9AM to 2PM



Spring Fling Plant Sale
 Tyler Men's Garden Club
 Broadway Square Mall Parking Lot
 April 24 9:30AM to 2:30PM

Home Garden Tour
 See page #1
 May 1 9AM to 4Pm



Texas Nature Trackers

More than ever, people are interested in being outdoors and in watching and learning about Texas wildlife. The Texas Nature Trackers projects involve general skills of observation and note taking -- you don't have to be a scientist to do them. Through Texas Nature Trackers projects, Texans learn how to gather data about various species found on public lands or on their own property. Then, the data is sent to biologists who use the information to give us a better understanding about the trends and management needs of various species in the state.

On April 23 and 24, 2010, the East Texas Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists will be hosting Texas Amphibian and Mussel Watch Train the Trainer Workshops.

The Texas Amphibian Watch Train the Trainer workshop will be held at The Nature Center, 11942 FM 848; Tyler, Texas 75707 on Friday, April 23, 5-10 p.m. The Texas Mussel Watch Train the Trainer Workshop will be held at the Old Sabine Bottom Wildlife Management Area, 21187 CR 4106; Lindale, Texas 75771 on Saturday, April 24, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Registration required. Fee \$10 per workshop; includes materials. To register and for more information contact Irene Hamel 903-566-9394 or irene.hamel@tpwd.state.tx.us



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