



MG Grapevine

NOTICE

MG Association Meeting
Rose Garden Center
January 3, 2008
Dr. Scott Ludwig

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Keith's Column - pg. 2
- Hours reports - pg. 2
- 2008 Class Schedule - pg. 2
- MG Website - pg. 2
- SFA Scholarship - pg. 2
- Rathbone's Ramblings - pg. 3
- Winter Landscape - pg. 3
- Discovery Science Pl. - pg. 4
- Spring Garden Conf. - pg. 4
- Overton Plant Trials - pg. 4

MG Grapevine Staff

Martin Davis, Editor
Dee Bishop

MG Grapevine Contributors:

Dee Bishop, John Brasher,
Keith Hansen, Bob Leffingwell,
Ed McGee, Andie Rathbone, Rhonda
Rholes, Ann Smith & Shirley Stephens

Published for the Master Gardeners of Smith County, Texas under the auspices of the Smith County Office of Texas Cooperative Extension, 1517 W. Front St. Tyler, TX 75702.

Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension are open to all individuals without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.



Texas AgriLife Extension

"Improving the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high-quality, relevant education."

Extension Office

Phone - 903-590-2980
Fax - 903-590-2984

January Meeting

This meeting will be the first of the new year and will include the installation of officers for the association.

Speaker for the meeting will be Dr. Scott Ludwig, Extension entomologist and integrated pest management specialist. The topic of his presentation will be chilli thrips, and the need to be on the lookout for them.

Association Dues

Dues for the association are just \$12 per year and are due January 1, 2008. Checks should be made out to SCMG. Bring your checks to Ann Smith at the January meeting. By mail, send payment to the Smith County Extension Office c/o Treasurer, Master Gardeners, 1517 West Front St., Suite 116, Tyler, TX 75702 or to Ann Smith, 14680 CR 2337, Tyler TX 75707.

Habitat for Humanity

On November 10th, four MGs helped four families put in their landscapes. Anne Brown, Cindy Harrington, John Wolverton, and Bob Leffingwell each worked with one of the homeowners. The work lasted several hours and included digging beds, preparing the soil, and showing the Habitat owners the proper way to plant and maintain the various shrubs, roses, annuals, and perennials that they had selected. Hannah Walker, HFH Family Services Director, secured the assistance of about a dozen other Habitat owners who helped in the bed preparation and benefitted by the instruction that was given in landscaping techniques.

The Habitat owners were all very thankful for the help and said that they would not have known where to start if it weren't for the suggestions and ideas of the Master Gardeners. **See HFH page 4**

The Community Garden at McClendon House

McClendon House provided the site and the SCMG provided the guidance. Now after eight years we take a look back at the success of the project. Over that period of time, more than thirty gardeners have had gardens there with five gardening this year.

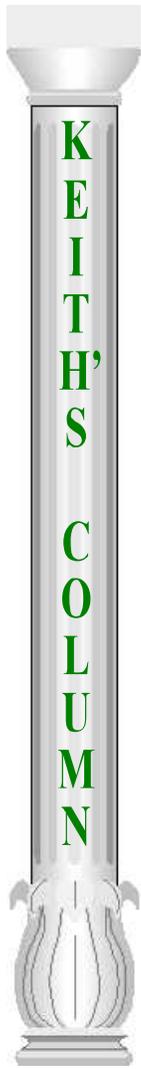
Bernice Jones has been gardening there for eight years. Currently she is gardening two full rows. Her many years of gardening has really helped all of the gardeners. She has shown others how to grow sweet potatoes. Bernice gives much of her produce to friends and relatives. Unfortunately, her garden always looks so nice that people pick her vegetables without asking her. Bernice has commented, "I am so glad this garden is here. I just love to garden."

Mary Hamlin has been participating in the community gardens for six years. She is steadily improving the soil by incorporating leaves in it each year. This year she not only grew green beans, squash, peppers, but had a good crop of peas and lots of zinnias.

Monique Wright has been gardening for two years. She had not grown many vegetables before, so she picked up a lot of tips from Bernice and the rest of the gardeners. She loves the fresh veggies and finds gardening is a good stress reliever.

Shirley Stephens has been gardening there for five years and now has three full rows. She planted sweet potatoes in an abandoned plot and harvested 200 lbs. In addition to giving them to family and friends, she gave sweet potatoes to the Holt House.

Shirley is the MG coordinator of this project. She says, "I feel the community garden has been an asset to many people."



Happy New Year.

Another wonderful and productive year has passed, and I want to take this opportunity to once again thank each of you for your support of Extension and the Master Gardener program. Your service and involvement means a great deal to me, the county and community, and our agency! With the New Year comes a new class (Class XV) which begins on January 10. There are 18 registered, including 3 couples. I hope you will stop by one or more of the classes to meet the new trainees, help them feel welcome, and even continue to mentor some during their first year in the program. As always, certified MG's earn CE's for auditing the classes as a refresher. See the class schedule at right.

Speaking of Extension, we now officially have a new agency name/brand as of January 1. We are now the **Texas AgriLife Extension Service**. Also, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (the agency Dr. Brent Pemberton works for) is now **Texas AgriLife Research**.

You'll see the new logo on the Grapevine newsletter. If you are involved in producing anything for print (brochures, handouts, etc.), for the media, (news releases, etc.) or

other items for the public, please contact me for guidelines regarding using the new agency brand and logo.

The new mission statement is: *"Improving the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high-quality, relevant education."* The new 'energy line' speaks about what our agency is all about, and what you as Master Gardener volunteers accomplish, which is *"Improving Lives. Improving Texas."*

May your new year be a blessed one, full of joy and happiness.

Volunteer Hours Reports

Your report should always be made at month-end, but this month there is a deadline for any report for 2007. Your report should be turned in by **January 15, 2008**. Drop your reports off at the office or send them to Martin Davis via e-mail or regular mail. For those who lack hours, but have special circumstances, please contact Keith Hansen to discuss the alternatives.

2008 Class XV January Schedule

Class XV will begin with Registration/Orientation at 1:00PM on January 10 at the Extension office. The rest of the January schedule, from 1:00 to 5:00Pm is as follows:

Jan. 15 - Botany - Keith Hansen

Jan. 17 - Entomology - Dr. Scott Ludwig (at Overton)

Jan. 22 - Environmental Landscaping - Dr. Doug Welsh (at Overton)

Jan. 24 - Perennials & Roses - Dr. William Welch

Tip of the Week project - Linda Sargent

Jan. 29 - Plant Diseases - Dr. Karl Steddom (at Overton)

Jan. 31 - Landscape Plants - Keith Hansen

Smith County MG Website

New things added to the website recently include:

Check *MG Projects* and *National Earth-Kind Trial* to see the slide show of the preparation and planting and the rose varieties planted there. Also added is a page which includes pictures of each rose included in the trial.

Look at *Photo Galleries* to view the new *Heritage Rose Garden* gallery of pictures by Keith Hansen.

Go to *MG Project* and *The IDEA Garden*. Look for the link to *Butterflies in Smith County*. Justin Valleau of Tyler has been photographing the butterflies of Smith County. Some of his pictures were taken in the IDEA Garden.

SFA Scholarship Recipient Says "Thanks"

In a recent letter, Darralyn Scobee says, "I want to express my sincere thanks to the Smith County Master Gardeners for the scholarship provided this semester."

She continues, "I am what is termed a "non-traditional student" here at SFA, meaning I am no freshly out of high school. I was widowed in 1995 and my whole focus in life has been raising my four children and providing for them."

For the next few years she worked a series of jobs, acquiring much-needed computer skills and was finally hired by Kilgore College. At Kilgore College, over a period of six years, she earned her associate's degree in Business while working there. She was encouraged by the administrators and instructors at KC to seek a bachelor's degree.

Gardening had been her therapy, her escape and her joy, thus she choose to focus on Horticulture at SFA. She will graduate in May 2008 from SFA, excited about the opportunities ahead.

In closing she said, "Generous people like the Master Gardener's club have made my senior year much easier by relieving some of the financial burden. Thank you again for the scholarship you provided."



Rathbone's Ramblings

It is both with relief and regret that I sit down in front of my computer to write my last column for the Grapevine. In the past 15 months, I have certainly learned a lot about the inner workings of the SCMG organization and have enjoyed being part of the planning process on the Executive Committee. However, I'm also looking forward to a little more free time in the coming year, perhaps even to tend to my own personal garden. It has been a fun and productive year for the SCMG and I would personally like to thank all the project coordinators for all their work on the groups' educational and fund-raising projects: Judy Hill & Shirley Stevens for their work in the Community Gardens, Jan Moch for taking over responsibility for the Education Committee this past year, Merlin Eck for a fabulous Fall Conference & Bulb Sale, Bob Leffingwell for all his work with Habitat for Humanity, June McClain for the Junior Master Gardener program, Don Davis for keeping the troops busy at Overton, Jean Watson for coordinating the Rose Garden Docents, Sue Clark for heading up our participation in the Tyler Flower Market, Linda Sargeant for getting out the Tip of the Week to all the area newspapers, Joan Adair for her work at the Tyler Day Nursery, Anne Brown for her tireless work in the Heritage Garden, Sue Adee & Cindy Harrington for keeping the IDEA Garden a place that everyone wants to visit, and Martin Davis for getting the Grapevine to all of us every month as well as performing the thankless job of keeping track of everyone's volunteer hours. I don't think I've ever been associated with a group that has so many tireless volunteers!

2008 is looking to be another busy year. Planning for the Spring Home Landscaping and Garden Conference to be held on Saturday, February, 16 is well under way and will feature talks on successful gardening, Landscaping with native plants, accessible gardening and Texas Superstars, as well as a discussion of common problems with small engines in gardening equipment and how to prevent them. As usual, Master Gardeners will be needed to man the registration and education tables, help with refreshments, and stuff handouts into the conference booklets. You'll be hearing more about this event at January's meeting.

We will also be participating again in the Tyler Flower Market during Tyler's Azalea Trails, the gardens for this year's garden tour have been selected, and I understand that Merlin and his team are already working on next fall's Fall Conference and Bulb sale. As you're starting to plan your new year, take some time to get involved in any of our group's many projects. Active participation in one of more of these activities adds to the enjoyment of your experience as a Master Gardener.

In the meantime, I hope each and every one of you have a wonderful Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. I'm wishing you all lots of sunshine, plenty of rain, blooming flowers, a bountiful harvest of vegetables and health and happiness for 2008.

Happy Gardening!

Remember Winter When You Landscape

by Dee Bishop

Winter in the garden doesn't have to be so terribly drab and dreary. There are many plants besides pansies that will give your landscape color, shape, interest, and even flowers. Let's remember some.

Camellias come immediately to mind, both sasanquas and japonicas. Between them both, you will have a riot of bloom from Oct.- March and often much later. They are evergreen and need to be treated like azaleas. Some grow huge, but there are many that will give you a nice 4x4 ft. shrub with little pruning. Some grow upright and others grow wide. Be sure and do a little sleuthing in the library before you buy some. They are a bit pricey but will out live you and give you years of lovely winter flowers for minimal care.

Dear old winter honeysuckle, and old time pass-a-long shrub that blooms from late Dec. through March and gives you a wonderful yardful of winter fragrance---a true blessing when all is dreary.

Witch Hazel will give you a short but sweet thrill one day while you are admiring it's brilliant fall foliage and realize it is also blooming little bright yellow flowers around Thanksgiving.

Of course no Texas yard would be complete without an old 'Japonica' or flowering quince. They usually begin blooming in late Dec. and bloom right through March. It never ceases to make me smile .

Crape myrtle is so beautiful in winter. Its bark and branch structure are truly outstanding in the winter garden. Enjoy the lovely tree branches during winter. Elm and maple are especially pretty against a blue winter sky.

The lovely and sometimes overlooked hollies are worth their weight in gold in winter with their bright red berries.

Be sure to add winter interest with flowering shrubs, bulbs, and annuals and then take the time to enjoy them each day.

(Editor's note: *In a message to me, Dee said, "Martin, this will be my last contribution to the Grapevine. I have an awful lot on my plate right now."*

Every since January 2003, Dee has faithfully provided her monthly column. She has never missed a deadline and was often the first to send her column. I am sure you join me in saying, "Thanks, we will miss your words of wisdom, your humor and your good advice." - Martin)

Discovery Science Place

We can all be proud of the work recently completed at Discovery Science Place. A museum employee called the Extension office and spoke with Keith, wanting help with their bee plant exhibit outside. The museum has a terrific observation bee hive indoors (currently being rehabilitated by a beekeeper), with an opening to the outside. The museum wanted help with plant selection and suggestions for attracting bees and butterflies to the bed, a short bee-line away from the hive's exit. They hope to let children see the bees at work, gathering nectar and pollinating plants.

We have improved the existing "Bee and Butterfly Garden" box exhibit, adding bee-magnet plants to the planting box and to two large pots by the museum entrance. Additionally, we have transformed one of the two six-foot diameter beds by the entrance.

Two interns, Rhonda Rholes and John Woolverton, were delighted at the opportunity to help a great group of people develop and delight young minds.

HFH from page 1 - One of the owners said that they will think of us every time they see things blooming in their beds. Another said that she will never forget submerging the roots of the plants in water and releasing the air bubbles before planting.

East Texas Spring Landscape & Garden Conference

The Smith County Extension Environmental Horticulture Committee has put together another outstanding line up of topics and speakers for the East Texas Spring Landscape & Garden Conference. So, mark your calendars for February 16. Topics and speakers include:

Dr. Jerry Parsons, Extension Horticulturist from San Antonio (developer of the Texas Superstar program and PlantAnswers on Aggie-Horticulture web site) – “Texas Superstars”; and “Success with Spring Vegetables”

Tim Lanthrum, owner of Cutters Equipment – “Common Small Engine Problems”; and “Calibrating Sprayers and Spreaders” (two short programs, plus a demonstration during lunch)

Aubrey King, owner of King Nursery in Tenaha – “Landscaping With Texas Native Plants”

Joe Novak, Senior Lecturer, Texas A&M Horticulture Dept. “Gardening for a Lifetime” (health tips, gardening ideas and techniques for people of all ages and disabilities).

Overton Plant Trials

Please mark your calendars now for the 2008 Field Days. The Overton Field Day will be held on June 26, 2008.



1517 Front St., Suite 116
Tyler, TX 75702

