



MG Grapevine

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NOTICE

January 6th
MG Association
Meeting at the Rose
Garden Center
11:30 AM

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MG Grapevine Staff

Martin Davis, Editor

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January SCMG Association Meeting

Donna Hagar co-director of the TMGA Conference in Glen Rose will be our speaker at our January meeting. I have heard this presentation twice and it was so good I am looking forward to hearing Donna again. Even if you are not planning on attending the state convention, please attend this meeting so you know what is available and how informative and educational the state convention is....plus we always have a lot of fun. We have approximately 20 already registered, You can attend the whole conference or the one main day.

Donna will explain what will be presented, the cost and how much fun and entertainment there will be. Paul James, HGTV's "The Gardener Guy" will be the keynote speaker. That in it's self is enough to get me motivated !! Joanie Matthews

Association Officers to be Installed

The following people will be installed as new officers for 2011 at the January 6th association meeting: Joanie Matthews, President; Ronny Duncan, Vice President/President-Elect; Pat Welch, Treasurer; Jean Smith, Secretary; Bill Kelldorf, Historian; Anne Brown and Jim Powell, Executive Committee at Large; Clayton Turner, State Director and Jean Watson, Alternate State Director.

The positions of State Director and Alternate are two-year terms. Thus Victor Long and Linda Sargent will continue in those positions.

Anne Pattullo will install the officers and continue on the Executive Committee as Past-President and Parliamentarian.

2011 Association Officer's Pictures

Go to <http://scmg.tamu.edu/about/> to view pictures of the SCMG association officers for 2011. President Joanie Matthews and all of the other officers, Executive Committee members and State Directors appreciate your support as they begin the new year.

Lifetime Members Named

Three outstanding, longtime SCMG's were named Lifetime Members at the December SCMG Christmas luncheon on December 2nd. They were Ed McGee, June McClain and Charles Minatrea. Their pictures can be seen at <http://scmg.tamu.edu/whats-new/>.

New Year's Resolutions

Do you make New Year's resolutions? Please make at least one resolution for 2011 which says, "I will report my Master Gardener volunteer hours at the end of each month, without fail!" A special thanks to those of you who already do that. A special request to the rest of you, please file your reports for December or any other unreported hours for previous months.

Send the reports to Martin Davis at mred2853@sbcglobal.net or mail them to 4130 Madera Dr., Tyler, TX 75707. The deadline for all 2010 reports is **January 15, 2011**.

Association Dues

Pat Welch reminds you that SCMG association dues for 2011 are due and payable now. Bring your check for \$20, made out to SCMG, to the January 6th meeting.





Happy New Year! I hope this year will be both enjoyable and prosperous for you, especially in light of the continuing poor economic situation. We continue to see interest

from folks growing or wanting to grow their own food, whether it is to reduce dependence on store-bought sustenance, or perhaps a desire to eat fresh-from-the-garden produce. National gardening surveys have indicated a continuing increase in interest in home-grown groceries, and not just to save money, but for a variety of reasons. These are great opportunities for us to help educate our fellow citizens on various ways they can grow some of their own groceries.

Just a little gardening reminder note – in case you haven't noticed, it has been mighty dry for the last several months. Even though it is much cooler, our plants need some soil moisture to maintain critical functions. If a really severe cold spell is predicted, be sure to adequately water your landscape, if possible several days before the mercury hits bottom. This will help reduce possible freeze-injury losses.

We have another great group of 24 trainees signed up for the new Master Gardener training class. First class is on January 11. As you get a chance over the next several weeks, stop by during class to meet and introduce yourself to the new members, and make them feel welcome. They will join us for the March monthly meeting. The entire schedule is posted online (see MG web site under "Coming Events"). Note that several of the classes will be in Overton. Keep in mind you can earn CE's (3) for each class audited.

Congratulations to Ed McGee, Charles Minatrea and June McClain for their dedicated service to Smith County, resulting in their status as Lifetime Members of the Smith Co. Master Gardener Association. Each one has spent many hours in different programs, helping make our organization what it is today.

I also thank each of you for your continued support of the Texas Master Gardener program, and in particular for all of your educational efforts for the residents of Smith County. Smith Co. Master Gardener's influence reaches far beyond Smith County through several of the high quality programs in which we are engaged.

Special thanks to Anne Pattullo for a great year leading the SCMG Association. And, thanks to all the Board members who met regularly, and worked diligently to represent you all with the best interests, seeking to "make the best even

better" (a phrase borrowed from the 4-H program). Welcome to Joanie Matthews as she takes over the leadership reigns of this great organization. I hope you will encourage her and give her your support.

Have a great year, and have fun in the garden!

Keith

Winter Gardening

by Dee Bishop

Winter gardening can be the most delightful experience, especially for those of you who have moved here from the frozen North. This winter is shaping up to be one of our typically mild dry winters with lots of sunshine. Soooo-let's get to work. We can prepare for a glorious spring and summer if we begin now.



1. Does the plant or plants you have chosen need sun, shade, moist, dry ? Choose the spot well.

2. Bed Prep---a properly prepared bed in which to plant anything, is of paramount importance.

Begin by removing all grass and weed and be sure to get all the roots (or you'll have the most lush grass garden you've ever seen). Till the area well. Apply a 3-4 in. layer of compost, manure, rotted leaves, etc. and till in. Add some good organic fertilizers such as cottonseed meal, alfalfa meal, blood meal, all of which may be purchased at a feed store much cheaper than a garden store. Refer to a fertilizer chart (extension office) for amounts. Till in well. Now if you have leaves apply them a foot or so thick and rough till. Cover with black or clear plastic and allow the sun and time to mellow and warm the soil, sprout the weeds, kill the weeds and make the best bed for planting you've ever seen. You can put down a 4-5 sheet layer of newspaper or shredded paper with or in place of leaves. Anything that was ever alive makes good compost.

3. While the bed is waiting, Clean and sharpen all tools. The old bucket of sand with motor oil works great to stand the tools in.

4. Move any plants that you need to. You can replant them, or discard them. If you discard them, wrap the roots in a plastic trash sack and sit on the curb for others.

5. Cut tree limbs, prune woody shrubs that bloomed in summer.

6. Clean birdhouses, build and place new ones. Scrub feeders and keep those birds fed.

7. Spray oil spray on shrubs and trees when the temperature will be above 40-50degrees for 3-4 days. (Do not spray Camellias or Japanese Maples.) Read directions. Oil spray will easily prevent lots of insect problems later and doesn't hurt the environment.

WATER!!! It's dry folks and you must water if you want your plants to survive winter freezes and dry winds.

What's Blooming Every Week

by Mary Claire Rowe

Editor's note: When we learned that Mary Claire had been writing her weekly newspaper column for nearly 10 years, we asked her to provide us some thoughts on the experience.



My first column in the *Tyler Morning Telegraph* was Nov. 21, 2001, or there about. It has always been called "What's Blooming In Our Garden?" Which, for better or for worse, was my idea.

I moved to Tyler in 1975, and loved driving around looking at all the plantings in the spring. I soon realized that most of the plantings were the same, and I wondered if there weren't other plants that the gardeners could use that would take the same location, but be different and add some variety.

When I became a Master Gardener and learned about the IDEA Garden, I thought it would be good if the general public had more of an opportunity to benefit from the knowledge being collected in the IDEA Garden about new plants. I thought if I could show people beautiful pictures of flowers, they would be intrigued to learn what they were and want to grow them here. I became a real "photographer" after I moved here, because TJC had just installed a new color lab and I took all the courses at least twice. It was such fun, and I learned so much. I had always loved to take photos, and I had taken art along the way.. So it was a good fit. Taking portraits of flowers was and is a great joy to me.

In the beginning, the editor at the time, Terry Cannon, was so kind to me. He loved my photos and made them large so they would catch the eye of the reader. He would enclose them in bright colors to emphasis the color of the flower. It did catch the eye and helped to promote the information about the flowers. MG Sue Adee told me that the need for more brochures in the IDEA garden went up by 100% due to my column, which meant that more people were going there.

My plan was also to write about gardening as a great way to have a happier life. Nothing is so absorbing as gardening, and it helped me and many others to get through the hard times of life, such as the slow diminishment of my dear Mother and her death last year after 8 years. Forty-five years ago, when my husband Gilbert had cancer and I needed solace, and to re-energize, I would go out into a garden, look at the goldfish, and smell the blooming flowers, and rejuvenate.

I also wanted to tell about all the Master Gardener activities, which I have done. Many times I did the annual MG Garden Tours information and photos. I have always mentioned the up-coming activities and events.

I hear from readers all the time. I get hand-written letters, forwarded emails, and people stop me on the street to praise my column and to ask advice. It is pretty amazing. I have really been surprised at the number of people who read my column and tell me they do so regularly.

I have really enjoyed learning about plants and techniques for gardening, and getting to know fellow gardeners.. It has been such a privilege. I hope it continues to be helpful to people.

Good Bug - Bad Bug

by Anne Brown

The cold days of winter are here and now is a good time to do some bug housekeeping. Removing debris from vegetable gardens and/or flower beds goes a long way to keep harmful insects from over-wintering and returning next spring when temperatures warm the soil. Tilling the soil in the garden will help bring insects, larvae and eggs to the surface where the cold weather may kill them. However, Ladybug beetles borrow into leaf piles so please leave some leaves where other insects will not be able to reach and harm plants and the Ladybug larvae will return in the spring to eat many of our early pests.

Fire ants, termites and Japanese beetles tunnel into the soil where it stays warmer than the air. Cockroaches and termites can invade our houses looking for warmth and moisture; fleas and ticks can remain on our pets or other animals. Many insects survive the cold as pupae or eggs.



One of the most invasive insects are Whiteflies on plants in greenhouses. Whiteflies can also come into houses on indoor plants that have been outside during

the warmer months. Since these insects live and feed on the underside of leaves, inspecting plants and removing the pests is easier before moving them inside. Using yellow sticky tape to catch the whiteflies is an easy way to help control these pests. Mealy bugs are another pest that shows up on indoor plants. Painting the mealy bugs with alcohol on swabs may help to control these pests. The bare branches of shrubs and trees reveal bag worm cocoons. These should be removed by hand, if possible, and destroyed.

Horticultural oils can be used on many hard to control pests. There are many different sources for these horticultural oils and some can be just as dangerous to our plants as the pests they are meant to control. Basically the oils work by smothering the pests; some oils are also poisonous. These oils are manufactured from petroleum or vegetables and almost all of them should be used with an emulsion. Spraying with horticultural oils while plants are dormant and air temperatures are low is a safe way to cut down on possible plant damage. Newer formulas are now available for warmer air temperatures. Be sure to read all the instructions before using horticultural oils.

MG Class XVIII Training Begins

Training for Class 18 will begin on January 11th with registration, followed by instruction for pruning trees and shrubs. Training will continue on Tuesday and Thursday as follows: January 13 - Plant Growth & Development; January 18 - Entomology (at Overton); January 20 - Soils & Fertility; January 25 - Landscape Plants, Tip of the Week; and January 27 - Plant Diseases (at Overton). Classes are from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Certified Master Gardeners may audit any class, earning 3 CEs for each class.

Looking ahead - The February 1st class will be on Perennials & Roses, with Dr. William Welch speaking.

For the full schedule of classes go to <http://scmg.tamu.edu/coming-events/> and click on the link there.

Overton Field Trial Follow-up Report

The results of the Summer 2010 Trials have been tallied and are presented in The Labor Day Report 2010 which can be found at <http://flowers.tamu.edu/labor-day-reports/labor-day-report-2010/> I have enjoyed the year and look forward to the 2011 trials. Thanks to all of those who participated in all of our activities this year. Brent Pemberton



The committee met on November 30th to hear reports and/or consider the following:

Plans for the December luncheon - 123 people expected. Reviewed general plans for 2011 plant sale. A committee will be formed for more complete planning.

A committee has been formed to write up state award submissions.

Approved cost of plaques to be given to Lifetime members at the December luncheon.

The 2011 SCMG Association budget was approved.

Considered cleaning the Extension office MG storage area and making an inventory of supplies kept there.

Heard a report of possible speaker and/or field trip to U.S. Trees in Canton.

Two tubs used for Home Garden Tours materials are missing.

Sue Adee presents new Lifetime Members Ed McGee, Charles Minatrea and June McClain



Lunch line at December Christmas luncheon



photos by Bill Kelldorf