



MG Grapevine

<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

<http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu>

July 2009

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NOTICE
No July
MG Association
Meeting

No July Meeting

Meetings of the Smith County MG Association are held each month, except each July and this year is no exception. So, instead of heading out to the meeting on July 2nd, you may stay home and prepare for the holiday on Saturday.

able to achieve my dreams more readily by being able to graduate college debt free and therefore be able to save money fast by not having to pay back burdensome student loans.

So once again, thank you so much!!”
Sincerely, Julia Gleason

Diane Crowe also sent a note, which said, in part: “I am the recipient of your scholarship this year and I want to extend my gratitude. This will help me in so many ways.



I was raised in Tyler, so I grew up around pine forests, lakes and rivers. My family has recently moved to Lindale. I worked at Bob Wells Nursery there and learned a lot about fruit and nut trees. I graduate May 2010 and I am looking forward to my career in horticulture.

This scholarship will help me with my tuition and fees. In turn, I will not have to work as much and be able to concentrate on my classes more. I am so grateful for that.”
Thank you - Diana Crowe

Our scholarship recipient at SFASU was **Rebecca Pledge**, who also sent us a note. She said, “Thank you very much for the scholarship. Your support will help me a lot as I conclude my last year at SFASU. I will graduate in May 2010 and then I plan to pursue my Master’s Degree out-of-state. I look forward to my future in horticulture and I hope you all have a great summer.”
Sincerely, Rebecca Pledge

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MG Grapevine Staff

Martin Davis, Editor

MG Grapevine Contributors:

Dee Bishop, Anne Brown, Keith Hansen, and Anne Pattullo.

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Extension Office

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

Scholarships

For a number of years the SCMG has awarded scholarships to students at Steven F. Austin State University and Texas A&M University.

On April 18th at the Texas A&M Awards Banquet, two Smith County MG scholarships were awarded. The recipients were Julia Gleason and Diana Crowe.



Julia Gleason sent us a thank you note, which said, in part: "Thank you so much for your generous scholarship! I am so thrilled to be picked as the recipient! This scholarship will really help me to achieve my goal to graduate college debt free. My

Dad has been helping me thus far, but my little brother will be starting college in the fall so this will really help both him and me out.

I have been studying horticulture for the past two years in hopes of gaining enough knowledge to be able to one day own a vineyard of my own. . I don't dream of being wealthy or famous, I just want to be able to spend most of my time outside and produce something that people will be able to enjoy.

By receiving this scholarship I would be



As we slide into another Texas summer, good gardeners take regular walks through their yard, examining the gardens for any signs of distress or impending trouble. Of course, water is always a critical issue in the

summertime, and hopefully as Master Gardeners you are practicing good watering practices – conserving water, applying no more than is needed, and not more often than is required. A good soaking, coupled with a good layer of mulch, should last several days in vegetable and flower patches. Of course, deep and infrequent is what lawns do best with.

Want a refresher on watering the lawn and landscape? Want to get some CEU's at the same time? Go to <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/MGtraining.html> and take the 1st three training modules (Landscape Water Conservation, Low Volume Irrigation, and Irrigation System Auditing). They don't take long, and it will be good information for this summer's watering season. To get CE credit, you must take the quiz and evaluation at the end of each module. Master Gardeners can select from any of these on-line modules to obtain up to 3 hours of re-certification education credits in a calendar year. Each module is worth 1 hour of credit. Master Gardeners are encouraged NOT to seek re-

certification credit for training modules they have completed in previous years.

The year is half over, so be thinking about volunteer opportunities ahead of you so you won't come up short at the end of the year. We can always use help in the office answering calls and walk-ins. It is a tremendous help to me to have you there to handle the routine questions that we get at this time of year (blossom end rot on tomatoes, leaf spot on oaks, what grass to grow, why don't I have any cucumbers, etc. etc.). Of course, your help is always welcome in our demonstration gardens at the Tyler Rose Garden. They are starting earlier now (8:00 a.m.) to beat the heat. The gardens always look great at this time of year with all the color plants coming into full swing.

Please feel free to call or email me if you have ideas, questions, comments or concerns. I always enjoy hearing from you all.

Thank You!

The Smith County Master Gardeners thanks the Gertrude Windsor Garden Club for their generous monetary gift for use in the Heritage Garden. Ideas for the use of the money are being considered by the coordinators, Craig Reiland, Brent Pemberton and Keith Hansen.

SWEATIN' SUMMER

by Dee Bishop

Summer is here! Oh it's sweatin' time again and it looks like we get an extra month of hot weather this year, as June is getting really hot. Heat means watering is the 'In' thing. Do you know how to water?

Dumb question you say, but I learned years ago that most people do not know how to water correctly. I know I didn't until I was taught.

First, let's water pots. If they are really dry--- you will have to go back several times to re-water them. Stick your finger in the soil to see if it is damp. Very often you think you have watered and the soil is just as dry as can be. If the pot is that dry, submerge it into a tub of water and soak until all the bubbles stop.

For those who do not like to get their fingernails dirty, there is a lovely little water meter that you can get for about \$5 at the garden centers. It will tell you how dry or wet a plant is, no guessing. It can be used in the ground too.

If you use sprinklers, be sure to watch each station occasionally to see if plants are blocking the flow of water. You may have to do a little quick surgery.

If you have a large tree that needs a good soaking, (about once a month or more), lay a soaker hose at a slow drip around the outside perimeter of the tree and let it soak over night.

Set a straight sided container out under sprinklers to catch water, and measure the amount every 15-20 min. until you have an inch or more and that is how long you need to water, about once or twice a week. If you are watering a lawn a few minutes every day or two, you are not watering deep enough for shrubs and perennials. Watering deep once a week is better than watering 5-10 min. every day. Keeping things damp is a good way to get every fungal disease known to man. Plants all need to dry out before being watered. Not bone dry, but the upper inch or two needs to be dry before watering. Then soak it well. That includes the lawn!

Next ---- get ready to pay the price when that summer water bill comes due! My Grandma used to use all her gray water to water with when her well was on the blink. She would say, "No sense planting something if you aren't going to keep it watered!"

Volunteer Hours Reports

It is easy and desirable that we file reports of our volunteer activities each month, but sometimes we forget or just don't get around to making the report. Reminders were sent to a number of you this month asking that you file reports. For those who have made your reports and for those who do so each month, we appreciate you.



Cindy's Comments

President, Smith Co. MG Association

The Executive Committee of the Smith County Master Gardener Association meets each month on the Thursday prior to the regular monthly meeting. In the bylaws, Articles VI and VII outline the Ex. Comm. duties and responsibilities. Any member of the SCMGA is welcome to attend the

Executive Committee meetings. It has been suggested that the general membership would be interested in some of the topics and the action taken by the committee.

Recently the Texas Master Gardener Association requested that each county association submit an email roster of their members for TMGA to form a database to be used to send out the TMGA newsletter and other special announcements. Well that topic certainly generated considerable debate among our Ex. Comm. The committee voted to NOT send a member roster of email address. Currently the SCMGA website has a link to the TMGA website where you can view the TMGA newsletter. To respect TMGA request that members receive the newsletter, you will now receive an e-mail from Martin Davis each month which will contain a link to the latest TMGA newsletter.

The committee who is working on Policy and Procedure's has met and Pat Welch gave an update on their progress. They have gone through what had been started several years ago and updated/revised that information. Their next step will be to review all past meeting minutes to evaluate what else if anything should be included in policies and procedures. Thank you to all committee members who are working on this.

An "Open House" (for the public) at the gardens is under discussion as well. The gardens (IDEA, Heritage, and Shade) look great. Did you visit them after last month's meeting? The open house would be held on a Saturday morning and MG's would be on hand to welcome visitors and answer questions. Several short talks about gardening would be given, similar to the "First Tuesday in the Garden" lecture series. At this time the open house is still in the discussion stage.

If you have any question, comments or concerns about the SCMGA and what the Executive Committee is doing, please contact myself or any of the others on the committee.

Looking forward to the great things that will happen this year! Cindy

Editor's note: **The Ex. Comm. members include**, in addition to Cindy: Vice President, Anne Pattullo; Treasurer, Pat Welch; Secretary, JoAnne Huffman; Historian, Bill Kelldorf; Parliamentarian, John Brasher; Ex. Comm. At Large, Monica Klein & Merlin Eck; State Directors, Harvey Collen & Rhonda Rholes and Alt. St. Directors, Carl Caskey & Joanie Matthews.

Leaffooted Bugs

by Anne Brown

Leaffooted bugs are "true bugs". There are many species in the Order Hemiptera with common characteristics of wings that fold flat over the body and mouth parts designed for piercing and sucking. Common to most of the eastern and southern parts of the United States and into California, these bugs are pests on many food, ornamental, grain, and nut crops. Leaffooted bugs are one of the larger species of true bugs with flattened portions on their hind legs that resemble a leaf edge, resulting in the name. These bugs have bodies that are shaped like shields and are colored brown with a cream colored stripe across the back. They emit a sharp odor to repel predators, a common defense for all stink bugs.

Leaffooted bugs over-winter as adults, usually in undisturbed areas of foliage but some may invade homes. Once temperatures reach 70° or more in the spring the females start to lay eggs, usually on plant stems or the mid-ribs of leaves. After hatching the nymph looks like a smaller version of the adult and can resemble assassin bugs since they are bright red in color. The nymphs may cluster on host plants until they mature.

These bugs feed on a large variety of plants but thistles are one of their favorites. Damage is caused by piercing plant tissue and sucking sap from the plant. While they prefer wild plants they will move to cultivated plants such as bean and cowpea seeds, okra pods, flowers, tomatoes, ripening fruit and nuts. The damage causes discolored spots on fruits and vegetables, early drop of citrus and malformed seeds depending on the maturity of the plant when damaged. Control is hard, mainly because the bug is not on the plant when the damage is seen. Monitoring the plants in the evening or early morning may be the best time to see the bug. Hand picking the bugs, hard blasts of water, weed control and cloth barriers may give some help. Sevin is the only pesticide recommended for use close to harvest. Other chemical controls should be researched and reading of pesticide labels is highly recommended when the product is being used on food crops.

Speaker's Bureau

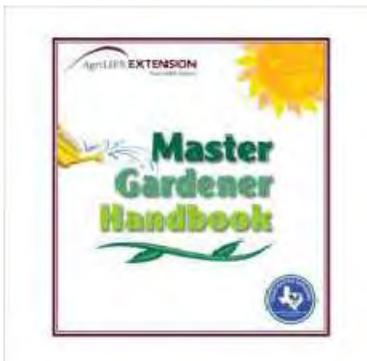
Unless you are a part of the group or you attended a meeting where a presentation was made you may not be aware of the people involved with the Speaker's Bureau.

During May our MGs spoke to garden clubs, Master Gardener groups and others. Their subjects included: Waterwise Gardening, Container Gardening, Composting, Heat Loving Plants, Butterfly & Hummingbird Gardens and Herbs. They spoke to a total of 173 people.

Speakers included: Sherri Watts, Jerry Mullins, Janice Suggs, Don Davis, Judy Chance, Andie Rathbone and Patsy Besch.

If you would like to participate, contact Harvey Collen.

The Sixth Edition of the Texas Master Gardener Handbook is now available!



New features include: Chapter 3 Earth-Kind Landscaping, Weeds and weed management and Updated plant lists.

If you wish to order the new handbook, here are the details.....The options are to get it complete with the text,

newly designed cover and tabs (\$43), or text only (\$28).

To order, please call or email MG Treasurer Pat Welch, (phone 903-894-8722 or grayball_234@yahoo.com) with your order by no later than July 17. She will collect names and payment. One order will be placed after that date, and the Handbooks will be distributed at a monthly meeting after they arrive (hopefully the August meeting) and at the Extension office. Keith Hansen

Unusual Publicity

Over the years the SCMG association has posted pictures on the web at Martin Davis's photo gallery. In 2004 a gallery of photos for the Home Garden Tour of that year was posted at <http://www.pbase.com/mrd/tours>. This gallery included a picture of Mark Scirto and Gillian Sheridan who were our honorary co-chairpersons that year. Recently Gillian has left the employ of KLTN without explanation. Many have wondered why and the station has offered no explanation.



Someone discovered the picture above, taken five years ago, and posted the link on a web forum. Since then, in the past month, the picture has been viewed 677 times (and still counting). Messages left at the gallery website have asked why Gillian was no longer on the news. We don't know!

A Recent Request for an Old Tip

A newspaper in Missouri requested permission to use a Tip of the Week written in 1997 by Ne Chichester. How about that?



1517 Front St., Suite 116
Tyler, TX 75702