



MG Grapevine

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NOTICE

There is no SCMG Association meeting in July

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A Baby Grows Up

The headline in the June 2007 *MG Grapevine* said "A New Baby is Born." The article went on to explain that the Smith County MGs now had their own website. On June 13, 2010, the SCMG website grew up and our baby now looks a lot different.

Three years ago the folks at A&M offered the opportunity for Master Gardeners across the state to use Grovesite online software as the basis for design of their website. Smith County was one of the first to do so.

Recently A&M offered the chance to change to WordPress software and once again SCMG signed up. With assistance from the good folks in College Station, the information on the existing site was moved into the new format. Keith Hansen and Martin Davis took it from there, massaged, reorganized and tweaked the info and finally said they were ready to go public.

They asked, "Is Smith County one of the first to convert?" The answer, "Smith County is the first county in the state to make the change!" Go to <http://scmg.tamu.edu> to see the result. Tell us how you like it and tell us if you find any problems (missing links, etc.).

Scholarships

The 2010 SCMG scholarship at Texas A&M was awarded to Clint Taylor from Henderson, Texas. He stated that his goal after he graduates is to make a positive impact in the developing countries of the world. He would like to work for the Borlaug Institute or the Peace Corps sharing his knowledge with people who need it.

At SFA State University the scholarship went to Lauren Deibert. She is a member of the SFA Horticulture Club and was on the ASHS Hort Science Judging Team at SFA. She is an excellent student and interested in pursuing landscape design when she graduates.

Project Updates

Work on the various MG projects around the community continues. Project coordinators have updated us on the following:

Tyler Day Nursery. Each Monday when the four year old class comes outside, we start with a story that relates to gardening or nature. After the story we talk about their garden and what we will be doing that day.

The kids enjoy planting, weeding and watering our garden. The past few weeks they have been able to pick cherry tomatoes, flowers, and leaves from herbs. We like to stress the five senses. We let the kids touch the plants, smell them, look at changes in them, taste vegetables, and listen to the sounds around the garden. Currently we have corn, squash, okra, tomatoes, watermelon, gourds, pumpkins, herbs, and flowers growing in our garden. One new thing that we are doing this year is letting the kids help us write a book for their classroom about the garden. The children at the Tyler Day Nursery are a joy to work with and the volunteers enjoy being in the garden with them each week. Submitted by JoAnn Adair

Home Garden Tour. The committee went to work immediately following the 2010 tour, previewing several special gardens for 2011. We are looking at gardens near I-20, in the Cascades, and South Broadway/Rieck Rd area. We have chosen April 30, 2011 as the tour date and are looking forward to another great tour. Submitted by Pat Turner

Overton Field Trials. When the Open House is done on June 24th, OFT is down for the summer and will start back with fall planting in late August, early September. Submitted by Don Davis

Calendar/Gardening Guide. Work on the guide proceeds. The theme for 2011 is "Partnering With Nature" and the cover will feature a spectacular photo by Mary Claire Rowe. Keith is currently proofing the submitted copy for

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Summer is here, but thankfully most of us have been getting some rain – It was pretty dry from early April through early June. When looking at the types of calls and inquiries we get

at the Extension office, some things are the same from year to year, and some things are quite different. No doubt weather patterns play a big role. Some plants seem to have really thrived due to the cooler winter and spring. Some may have struggled due to the same conditions. Insects and diseases in like manner are influenced by temperature and rainfall (or lack of it).

Right now, Grey Leaf Spot (GLS) of St. Augustine is a big problem, not only in our area, but throughout the eastern part of the state, according to Dr. Kevin Ong with the Extension AgriLife Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab in College Station. I have an article about GLS in the FAQ section under the Home Gardening menu on my web site. Look for dark spots, and in severe cases, the grass may appear to melt away.

Another common problem we are seeing is on tomato plants. Plants look fine, then start wilting, and in a day or 2 are dead. I've seen at least 3 different confirmed pathogens in different gardens. Southern blight, Fusarium wilt and bacterial wilt. The first 2 are fungi, and the 3rd obviously is a bacterium. Fusarium and bacterial wilt plug up the vascular system and cause death of the plant. Southern blight attacks more vegetables than just tomatoes – you'll see white fungal strands at the stem where it goes in to the ground, often with little salmon-colored dots stuck to the fungus. Unfortunately, there is no cure for any of these, and for sure, tomatoes and other nightshade family plants (peppers, eggplants, potatoes) should not be planted there for the next several years, but rotated with other, unrelated crops.

Speaking of diseases, we are on the lookout for a deadly citrus disease that we are seeking to keep out of Texas. It is called Citrus Greening, and I've written about it briefly before. Currently it has NOT been found in Texas, but is in Louisiana. Plant Pathologists are seeking to enlist Master Gardeners and any other interested persons to come to a free training here in Tyler to be equipped to be "First Detectors" of this disease. You may be wondering, "Why us here in North Texas?" Because it is most likely the disease would be introduced through a home backyard

citrus plant brought in to the State from an infected area. In some other States, the first detection of this disease was on home citrus. Texas has a quarantine which prohibits the importing of citrus from any other state.

I would encourage you to attend this free training on July 14, 9:00 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. at the Smith Co. Extension office to learn about the disease and become part of the First Detector network. Register online at <http://plantclinic.tamu.edu> - you can contact me if you have other questions. Certified Master Gardeners can earn 4 hours of CE credit for attending.

There is also a more comprehensive MG Citriculture training being given elsewhere in Texas that includes the above Citrus Greening training, along with a comprehensive session on growing citrus in the home orchard. For details, go the Texas Master Gardener web site.

A couple of months ago, I mentioned a new project for creating short YouTube videos using MS Photo Story and Audacity software programs. If any of you have gone through the tutorials, and would like to get started on creating some video projects, please contact me. When we say "video", we are referring to animated photos. For examples of the type of thing we're talking about, please go to the EarthKind web site and look at the videos.

I envision many MG's could be involved, besides those who do the actual editing. This would include: identifying subject matter for the videos; coming up with photos to use for the videos; writing a script for the videos; and recording the script. Some initial ideas I have include videos for our different demonstration gardens (plenty of photos already available), a general video about the SCMG program (could be posted on the homepage of our new website); other projects we are involved in, upcoming events (Fall Conference/Bulb Sale; Calendar; 1st Tuesday in the Garden; Secret Garden in the East Texas State Fair), etc. etc. Again, let me know how you might like to help.

If you are finding yourself with some spare time, please consider helping out at the Help Desk in the office this July. We could really use some help this month. Contact Karen or Cyndi for available times. I really appreciate your support. Keith



Keith Hansen, Ted Fisher & MG's, Janet Cacho, Jean Smith and Billie Petty judge produce at Tyler Farmer's Market, on Saturday June 26th.

Photo by Bill Kelldorf

Good Bug – Bad Bug

by Anne Brown

Just like many thousands, I often go to the internet to get answers to questions or information on a subject that is interesting. I have also realized that sometimes a single word can make a big difference in the results I get.

If you type worm that is what the computer will search for. If you type caterpillar that is also what the computer will search for. So the lesson is being sure you know if the crawly thing you have questions about is a worm or a caterpillar.



Worms and caterpillars are both active at night, do not have skeletons and can be close to the same size. The difference is that caterpillars have legs, worms move by contracting their body segments.

Caterpillars are hairy.

Larvae of the Spanish Moth were recently found on an amaryllis. All the gardener could see were lots of little black and white worms. When I tried to id the “worm” I got results but they were not correct.



After learning that the stripes went around the body I tried again. No results. So, after thinking about the word used to describe this larvae it finally came to me, “caterpillar”. Bingo! Not only did I get results but they were the correct results. Just one word, but what a difference one word can make.

By the way, the larvae of the Spanish Moth are known as “Convict Caterpillar” and are very destructive. The caterpillar eats the leaves, bulbs and rhizomes of many plants not just amaryllis. The adult can be found in the southern states and eastern coast of the US. Inspecting the underside of plant leaves to locate eggs clusters will help control the population since females can produce a hundred eggs at a time. Removing the eggs and/or larvae can reduce the population, Bt or systemic insecticides are other controls.

II About Worms
University of Florida IFAS Extension

Landscape Design Study Course

Dr. Bill Welch and Ms. Suzanne Milstead wish to announce the latest in the Landscape Design Study Courses: Number I, Series XXII - September 13-14, 2010. The courses are held in College Station, TX., Participants may take the four courses in any sequence.

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horticultural accuracy with the copy heading to the printer mid-July. Some new vendors are lined up to help us market the finished product. Submitted by Shirley Hightower

AgriWorld/Secret Garden. Master Gardeners have had one meeting so far to plan the layout of our larger allocated space in the Secret Garden, which will almost be twice as big as last year. We also talked about reworking some of our stations to improve our message and to discuss what worked and didn't work last year. We also discussed the flow of the garden stations, and dividers between the stations for more privacy and "secret like" feel for the school tours.

AgriWorld. The overall AgriWorld committee is expanding the exhibits and activities in AgriWorld for the 2010 East Texas State Fair (Sept 23 - Oct 2). This year throughout the days the Fair is open, there will be several different demonstrations going on in the AgriWorld building (Secret Garden is one of the sections in the building). The ideas for demonstrations cover a broad spectrum of agricultural life and activities, from wool shearing and butter making, to spinning, goat milking, wildlife rehabilitation, just to name a few. The Fair is seeking volunteers to do these demonstrations. Demonstrations discussed that Master Gardener could possibly help give include: Rainwater Harvesting, Composting, Bulb Planting (tie in with Bulb Sale and Conference), and Container Gardening. These demonstrations can be scheduled to fit your schedule any time during the Fair. There will be a demonstration stage. However, we could use the Rainwater Harvesting and Composting stations in the Secret Garden for those demos, but they would not be available on mornings when the school children come through AgriWorld on scheduled tours, which are Sept 28 - Oct 1. The demos could be done those afternoon/evenings. Senior citizen's day is the first day of the fair (Sept 23). The demos should be long enough to do a good program, probably not over 30 to 45 minutes and 1, 2, or 3 times during the Fair (whatever works for you). Please contact Hazel Bateman thebatemans@hughes.net if you can help with either giving a demonstration or with the Secret Garden project. We will send out an email for next meeting date. Submitted by Hazel Bateman

AgriWorld photo galleries are online at http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/AgriWorld_Photo_Gallery.html

Late update on the Overton Horticultural Field Day on June 24th. It rained, which reduced the crowd to about 140, but otherwise the event was successful. Go to <http://scmg.tamu.edu/whats-new/> for more information, including a video.

Coffee Walking

by Anne Pattullo - President SCMG Association

Summer is definitely here and all gardening activities need to be finished by 10:00 A.M. for our health and our sanity. The huge rain earlier this month was both a blessing and a curse. My poor pepper plants went into severe shock and looked like goners for several days. Now they seem to be pulling out of it and I think will be OK. Other things like my coleus and Yellow Bells loved the heat and rain and seem to grow several inches every day. Something I've learned about gardening is that no matter what the weather, some plants like it and some just hate it. Sort of like people, I guess. I am so sorry we had to cancel our picnic at Jim Powell's cabin. I was afraid it would clear off and be gorgeous by picnic time, making me a poor decision maker, but Jim assured me that at exactly 5 PM it was pouring at his place. We have tentatively selected October 21st to try again. By then it should be cool enough for a wiener roast like we had originally planned.

It seems to me that every season some different plant really stands out. I don't know if the weather is just perfect for it or I am just noticing it for the first time. This spring it has been purple cone flowers. After several years of small clumps, some of which just wilted and died, I have two huge clumps



with more blooms every day. I haven't done so well with the new orange and yellow cultivars but I have a giant hot pink called 'Rubinstern' and the pink double decker one. I don't know if I really like it, but it sure is unusual!

This has definitely not been the season for tomatoes at my house. I did everything right – raised bed, homemade compost, careful plant selection, full sun! They grew great to about 2 feet and then just wilted and died, one by one. I'm especially disappointed because this was going to be my summer of fresh salsa and I planted 4 different kinds of peppers to go with my tomatoes. According to Keith, there have been lots of calls into the office from people with similar problems. All the hot weather, followed by heavy rain, followed by even hotter weather has increased both bacterial and fungal wilt.

There is no meeting in July but Master Gardener work goes on. Committees are hard at work on the calendar, AgriWorld and the fall conference/bulb sale. If you think you'd like to help with any of these, I'm sure the chairmen would welcome a friendly email or phone call. We still work in the gardens every Tuesday and would love to see some extra hands there so we can go home before the heat



is too awful! Be thinking about any bulbs you can provide for the October 9th sale. By using member bulbs we can save lots of money and increase our profits. Thanks to those who helped with the Tyler Farmers' Market Vendor day. Now just finish reading your Grapevine and have a glass of cold tea. Happy summer!

Hot & Dry

by Dee Bishop

Isn't it always hot and dry in summer? Well of course, only this is only June and technically spring. We just think it's hot and dry, July will show us HOT and Dry.

Many of you may be planning summer vacations and worry what will happen to your prized plants. I may be able to give you a few tips that will help carry them through until you get back. If the plants are root bound and overgrown, trim them back and repot in larger pots using water holding crystals in the soil. Other ways to hold moisture are adding a sponge or two to the bottom of the pot, use baby diapers to hold moisture, or even better, use self watering pots. A day or two before you leave, set the pots in plastic bags and make sure the whole pot is covered. You can just wrap the bag around the bottom of the plant. The plastic will hold in water while you are gone. Then place the plant inside your house, in a light window. The cooler temps and the plastic will keep it watered while you are gone. They will be good for 2-3 weeks this way.

For plants outside, move potted ones to shade. Bury pots down in leaves (those leaves you saved from fall come in handy now), wood chips, or even in the ground. They will stay watered much longer this way.

For plants in the ground, make sure your sprinkler is in good working order and have a friend check on them a few times anyway. Water deeply and mulch well. Now is a good time to use that Cloud Cover spray to keep leaves from dehydrating. Spray according to directions.

Water deep, mulch well, and have a friend look after them to see that they are getting enough water. Have a great vacation and try not to worry.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on May 27th and considered the following:

Home Garden Tour - Previewing next year's homes. Three homes have committed, but two more are needed.

Bus Trip wrap-up - The trip was a big success. Receipts exceeded expenses. Approved the use of the excess money to buy meat for the June 10th MG picnic.

IDEA Garden walkway update - Part of the walks are already done. Construction of other walks will begin after June 5th.

It was reported that the Emeritus Committee had met and further meetings are planned.

The duties of the State Directors listed in the SCMGA by-

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EXECUTIVE *continued from page 4*

The duties of the State Directors listed in the SCMGA by-laws should be changed to read: "Submit a formal report to the state newsletter about SCMG activities at a minimum of once each quarter."

The Garden Open House, scheduled for June 5th, was discussed. Jana Bowman has sent out news releases.

The Executive Committee will not meet in June. The next meeting is scheduled for July 15th at 10:00 a.m.

Martin Davis reported that 49 people have not reported any volunteer hours for 2010. Keith emphasized importance of monthly reports since the information is needed for his reports.

Concern continues for vandalism and stolen plants in the gardens. Work continues on the possibility of locking the garden at night which currently is not possible.

Keith Hansen asked for help judging produce at the Tyler Farmers Market on June 26th. He further advised that there are opportunities for Junior MG programs in some area schools. MGs are facilitators and resources.

Someone Special

KTBB continues to recognize volunteers as *Someone Special*. The follow MGs have been or will be named.

June 1- JoAnne Huffman, June 2-Gary Dobbs, June 3-Kay Dobbs, June 4-Ronny Duncan, June 7- Merlin Eck,

July 30- Bob Ellis, August 2-Mike Engleman, August 3- Connie Farrar, August 4-David Gary, August 5-Debrah Golden, August 6-Nadine Grabow.

Master Gardener Specialist Training

Citriculture Specialist - July 29-30, 2010 Fort Bend County - Rosenberg, TX and September 2-3, 2010 Bexar County - San Antonio, TX.

Plant Propagation Specialist - August 26-28, 2010 Taylor County - Abilene, TX - registration deadline - July 30th

For those interested in details, contact Keith Hansen.



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