



# MG Grapevine

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## NOTICE

MG Association Meeting  
Rose Garden Center  
June 5<sup>th</sup> - 11:30 AM

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### Extension Office

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## June Meeting

The Naked Truth Revealed in Conroe! What happened in Conroe, didn't stay in Conroe.

Come to the June MG meeting and find out what all of this means as John Brasher, Anne Brown, Keith Hansen, Cindy Harrington, Joanie Matthews and Doris Waits discuss the recent state MG conference in Conroe.

### After Meeting Garden Tour

The garden tour following the June 5<sup>th</sup> MG Association meeting is at the home of Andie and Eric Rathbone at 13270 Oak Hill, Flint. Andie has over 300 varieties of daylilies and she promises that they will all be in bloom! Perhaps, not all, but many will be blooming.

To find the Rathbone's home, begin by taking Old Jacksonville Hwy. 10 miles south from the loop to FM 346 (4-way stop at the intersection with a Chevron station on the corner). Turn right on FM 346 following it as it doglegs through Flint, but do not turn at the Baptist Church. Go straight toward Noonday on what becomes FM 2868.

Go approximately two miles to a very tall hill. The entrance to Three Creeks Estates is immediately at the bottom of the hill on the right (Spring Creek Drive). Follow the road around a corner to an intersection with Oak Hill Lane on the left. The Rathbone's home (13270) is the second on the right on top of a little hill.

### First Tuesday in the Garden

On Tuesday June 3<sup>rd</sup> the topic for the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in the Garden presentation is, "Texas Superstars." Sue Adey will discuss this group of tough plants at noon in the IDEA Garden.

There is no July or August program. The series resumes in September.

## Scholarships for 2008-2009

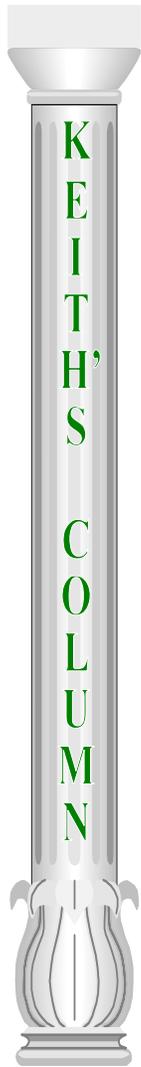
The SCMG scholarships for the academic year beginning in the fall of 2008 have been awarded at Texas A&M University and at Stephen F. Austin State University. We have received letters of appreciation from three of the recipients.

**Lydia Wessner** was once again awarded a scholarship at Texas A&M. She will begin her Senior year next fall, after having finished what she describes as an "excellent" year. During the summer of 2007 she studied in Italy as part of a reciprocal exchange program. She continues as an active member of the Texas A&M Horticulture club and the Entomological Student Organization.

**Terry Felderhoff** grew up interested in the family garden as he expanded his experience with 4-H projects. During the past five summers he has held horticulture related jobs, working in the breeding fields of Texas A&M University. While he has continued interest in genetics, his interests are moving toward the production of fruit and vegetables. With two siblings currently pursuing advanced degrees, he and his family are especially appreciative of the SCMG scholarship.

**Ryan Dickinson** of Linden, TX will be a Senior at Stephen F. Austin State University. He hopes someday to specialize in and operate a floriculture business. He was "astonished" to receive the SCMG scholarship. He will be getting married in August 2008 and the scholarship will relieve part of his financial burden as he and his bride begin the fall semester at SFA.

All three recipients thank the Smith County Master Gardeners, commending us for making the scholarships available to them.



I would like to add a new twist to our Extension office Master Gardener Help Desk. As you know, this service is where Master Gardeners assist clientele who call or come by the office seeking help in various gardening topics. I would like to develop and have a core of volunteers who would be willing to regularly staff the Help Desk. Now, stay with me and keep reading! I envision perhaps 20 or more Master Gardeners who would staff the desk throughout the year. The more Master Gardeners that are willing to take a slot, the less frequently you would need. For example, if we had 20 Master Gardeners involved, then that would work out to about one time per month.

I plan to provide periodic trainings, both for giving you overall resources for finding answers to questions, and also to provide seasonal updates on Frequently Asked Questions, etc. This group could also serve as mentors or aides for interns when they serve in the office.

Several of you have indicated to me over the last few years that if I ever needed you to help us out on phones or in the office to let you know. So, I hope you, and many more, would come forward and help me help the folks in Smith County through this valuable

service.

Please contact me within the next couple weeks by email (preferably) or call me if you are willing to help me, or if you have any questions about this program. We'll set a training date once we get an initial group together.

Have a great summer, and stay cool and hydrated.

### Backyard Wildlife Habitat

How many of you currently have a "Backyard Wildlife Habitat"?

Come find out how to make your own garden a registered Backyard Wildlife Habitat. Each Tuesday morning during the month of June at the Heritage Garden information and examples of requirements will be presented to those interested in becoming a certified habitat. By implementing the requirements and submitting the required paperwork with payment of \$15, eligible gardens can be certified through either the National Wildlife Federation and/or the Texas Parks and Wildlife.



### Habitat for Humanity



In May, Hazel Bateman, Cindy Harrington and JoAnne Huffman met with two families to help design their landscapes and assist with plant selections. On May 17th work was completed for one homeowner with 20-25 working partners. The second home is soon to be completed and scheduled for a work day. Master Gardeners are there to provide educational assistance to the new homeowners most of which have never had a lawn or beds before.

A new Habitat for Humanity class with 17 families has recently started. Hanna Walker from Habitat for Humanity said it would take approximately two years for the homes to be completed.

### Speaker's Bureau

If you are a member of a Garden Club, you may have been heard one of the Smith County Master Gardeners give a presentation. If not, you may not be aware of this service to the community. During the first four months of 2008, 14 members of the SCMG Speaker's Bureau gave talks to 26 groups, which included 568 people in and around the Tyler area.

The topics offered by the speakers were as exciting as "Sex in the Garden", as mundane as "Vegetable Gardening" as challenging as "Painting the Garden" and as mysterious as "Tussie Mussies". So, what's in a name?

The speakers will tell you that they enjoy meeting other gardeners and that they find the experience of sharing fulfilling. If you would enjoy being part of this group, just tell Andie Rathbone and she will add you to her list.

### State Awards

Smith County Master Gardeners received the following awards in statewide competition at the conference in Conroe.

First Place - Graphic Presentations - PowerPoint presentation on bulbs for the fall conference/sale.  
 Second Place - Mass Media - SCMG Website  
 Second Place - Publication - Butterfly Garden Brochure  
 Third Place - Association - SCMG Association  
 Third Place - Project - Rose Garden Docents

### New E-Mail Addresses

Correction - Tamara Listiak -  
 scotttamara@embarqmail.com

Mary McGee - mimimcgee@att.net

Jon LeBleu - texjll@sbcglobal.net

Pat Massad - msmomcat@yahoo.com

### New Phone Number

John Meadows - 903-534-2836

## F the CORNER

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O  
M



### You shoulda gone.....

#### .....You oughta go

Go where, go when? Go to the Texas Master Gardener State Conference in April. The TMGA holds their state conference in late April each year. A local Master Gardener group somewhere in the vast state of Texas hosts it. I attended my first TMGA state conference last month in Conroe. The Montgomery County Master Gardeners hosted it.

With it being my first MG state conference I was not sure what to expect. Having been to large conferences of other types in years past I was somewhat apprehensive about what I would find. I knew there would be lots of people there, it turned out to be about 700 total in attendance. I anticipated long lines and lots of confusion. Boy was I surprised. The speakers list was impressive, but so what I've heard all those folks before. Again I was very pleasantly surprised. Tours, tours and more tours. Well I guess I might as well tag along for one, after all it can't be too bad. I sure am glad I did.

Now that I have you totally confused I will tell you to come to the next meeting on June 5 and we'll explain what we found at the state conference, why I was surprised, why I'm glad I went. And why you should go.

Next year the state conference will be just down the road in Marshall. If you ever wanted to attend this will be a golden opportunity to do so just next door. Come to the June meeting and we'll tell you why you shoulda gone and why you oughta go. John Brasher

### Plant of the Month

by Anne Pattullo

Are you old enough to remember when girls wore little nosegays of paper flowers at the neck of their blouses? I think it was back in the 50's, long before silk and even plastic! The first time I saw a 4 inch pot of white Cup Flowers at Home Depot, I immediately thought of those bunches of crinkly little white paper flowers with the yellow stars in the center. That is exactly what they looked like and I had to touch them to be sure they weren't paper. I knew I had to buy some and that was my introduction to a delightful new perennial for my flower garden.

Dwarf Cup Flower's botanical name is *Nierembergia hippomanica* and they are native from Mexico to Chile and Argentina. They generally come in either white, which is known as Mont Blanc, or bright blue violet, called Purple Robe. They form a mound from 6-12 inches high and wide of perfectly shaped 1 inch flowers with yellow centers. The foliage is finely divided and needle like. They make excellent plants for the edge of a border or billow over the edge of a container.



I learned the hard way that Cup flower doesn't like our hot summers very much. Although it takes full sun up North, here it likes partial sun with protection from afternoon rays. I have had an increasingly large clump for two years now. It starts to bloom in March and is still going strong at the end of May. The summer heat takes its toll and it takes a rest, although if you deadhead regularly you can keep it going through June. A good trim in early spring before the new growth begins, gets it off to a good start. Be sure your Cup Flowers have fertile, well-drained and consistently moist soil. Propagation is easy, from seed or divisions. Cuttings can also be taken in the fall.

### Home Garden Tour a Success

Wow! What a great day for the Garden Tour! Almost perfect weather and great publicity from the Tyler paper (especially Mary Claire Rowe's excellent profiles of all the tour gardens) brought out almost 500 people to view the tour gardens. There never seemed to be a lull during the day as people were coming to the gardens right up to the close of the day at 4:00 PM.

Thanks to Sue & Bob Clark, Ken & Sharon Nelson and Herb & Josephine Coursey who opened their gardens to the tour. I know how much work goes into getting your gardens ready for a public tour and believe me, from the comments I heard from the visitors to the gardens, everyone appreciated your efforts. The comments I heard were that this year the gardens were better than ever, and the people attending the tour liked the diversity in the gardens.

Thanks to the hard-working Garden Tour Committee Suzanne Gates, Wincie Caskey, Janice Suggs, Ann Kelley, Carolyn Bonifay, Monica Klein, and Linda Sargent who helped find tour gardens, passed out publicity flyers, organized volunteers and set up signs directing people to the tour gardens. Without this hard-working group, we wouldn't be able to put on the Garden Tour.

Thanks also to the garden Team Leaders Suzanne Gates, Carolyn Bonifay, Wincie Caskey, Scherel Carver, Monica Klein, Ragna Neil, Ann Kelly, Kathy Moore and Janice Suggs, who made sure the volunteers appeared on time, provided information on each garden to help the docents, and were prepared to handle any surprises that happened.

And finally, thanks to the many, many Master Gardeners who served as docents and ticket takers and worked before the tour to help the homeowners get their gardens ready for tour day. This is one of those events where we need lots and lots of help, and I really appreciate the willingness of everyone in our group to pitch in and help. Your hard work and enthusiasm are the reason this event is so successful. **HOMES continued page 4**

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### **This and That**

Once each year there is no Smith County MG meeting and that is in July. With this in mind, the Executive Committee will not be meeting in June. Rest assured, there will be a July *MG Grapevine*.

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#### **HOMES - from page 3**

Remembering that it is always wise to end on a high note, I am retiring from the job of coordinator of the Garden Tour. Scherel Carver has graciously agreed to take over this responsibility and I know you will all give her the same support you have given me over the past five years. Thanks again for everything you did this year to make this year's tour the best ever!

Andie Rathbone

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For more information and pictures of the SCMG scholarship recipients, go to <http://scmg.tamu.edu> and click on Scholarships

### **Overton Field Day**

The Overton Horticulture Field Day is on Thursday June 26 this year. As before, the program will start at the North Farm at 8:30 am, move to the Demonstration Garden and Container Trials at about 10 to 10:30 am. Lunch will be served at 11:30 am.

After lunch, the program will move indoors where Brent Pemberton and Jimmy Turner will give an overview of what they we saw at the California Pack Trials this spring and Terri Starman will give a presentation on the Container Garden Trials. More information including a press release and the schedule of events can be found at <http://overton.tamu.edu/flowers/fieldday.htm>.

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### **East Texas Gardening Blog**

Have you ever visited Keith Hansen's blog? He has a number of interesting comments and insights posted there. Check it out at <http://agriflifelogs.tamu.edu/mt/etg/>



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