



# MG Grapevine

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## NOTICE

June 3<sup>rd</sup>  
MG Association  
Meeting at the Rose  
Garden Center  
11:30 AM

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## Monthly Meeting Notes

by Joanie Matthews

Have you sat on your patio about 9:00 at night and wish you could see more of your flowers? Lee Ann Martin of Bittersweet Farm in Hawkins will present a program on "Moon Gardening with Herbs." After her presentation we will know how we can have a garden that will "GLOW" at night. As a bonus Lee Ann will also share with us a listing of deer resistant plants and shrubs.

Lee Ann lived near Rodale's Institute in Pennsylvania, taking lectures and classes she gained much plant wisdom. Later taking herbal classes at a nearby Herb Shop, eventually working there and becoming in charge of their "Show Garden" she quickly found her passion in herbs. Lee Ann is a former President of the Greater Fort Worth Herb Society. She passes on her knowledge and love of herbs to garden clubs, church groups and civic organizations.

## Our Secret Garden Exhibit

We invite you to join us in planning the 2010 "Our Secret Garden" exhibit in the AgriWorld exhibit held at the East Texas State Fair.

Our first planning meeting for the Secret Garden 2010 will be June 9 at 1:00 pm in the Activities Bldg at the fairgrounds. We will start the meeting with a summary of the goal of the project, what we have done in the past and then get into the planning for this year. This year we've been given twice the amount of space for the Secret Garden; plus, we need to improve upon some of the information sections and the layout of the display. We need everyone's help to brainstorm ideas and methods to make this year even better than the last.

Hazel Bateman, Project Coordinator

## Open House in the Gardens

The Smith County Master Gardeners are hosting an Open House June 5<sup>th</sup> to help acquaint the regional public with our Secret Gardens. The gardens are located at the southern end of the Tyler Rose Garden and are often overlooked by visitors. The SCMGs are responsible for the design and maintenance of four distinctively different gardens there.

\* The IDEA Garden is a demonstration garden that is used for community education. This garden is used mainly for teaching purposes and has something blooming year round.

\* The Heritage Rose Garden showcases roses in a landscape setting, along with shrubs, herbs, heirloom bulbs, ornamental grasses, perennials and annuals; many plants you may remember from your childhood either by sight or fragrance.

\* The Shade Garden offers the community the ability to see that a garden is possible even in the shade of large trees. Featured here are many varieties of camellias and Japanese maples, ferns and other shade lovers.

\* The fourth garden is a new addition to the Master Gardeners' efforts. It is called the Sunshine Garden as the majority of the plantings are yellow and white.

The public is invited to visit these secret gardens during an Open House on Saturday, June 5th from 9am - 1pm hosted by the Smith County Master Gardeners who will serve as docents and be on hand to answer any questions. It is the Master Gardeners' desire to educate the public that these gardens are here for viewing enjoyment.

Go to <http://scmg.tamu.edu> Coming Events for pictures by Keith Hansen.



How is your lawn looking this spring? If it's anything like the scores of folks who have contacted our office (and most other Extension offices) about their lawns, know that you are not alone. Seems like the winter indeed has put a significant ding on grass, especially St. Augustine grass. Many lawns have extensive areas of dead grass. Last month I mentioned that stressed grass will be more prone to winter injury. Stressed grass also is more prone to Take All Root Rot (TARR), which as the name implies, rots roots, resulting in weakened and large dead areas of grass. And we have been getting samples in with TARR. Another stress that can weaken lawns is weed killers. As you know, pre-emergent herbicides work by preventing weed seeds from rooting after they germinate. They can also do a good job of stunting grass roots as they emerge from surface runners in the springtime. We have seen a number of samples in the office with the tale-tell sign of short, stubby, club-ended roots, indicating herbicide injury from an application of pre-emergent herbicide.

For a little more information, see the recently written the news release by Dr. James McAfee, Extension Turfgrass Specialist

<http://agnews.tamu.edu/showstory.php?id=1915>

I'm excited about our upcoming demonstration gardens "Open House" on June 5. This is a great way to showcase our educational projects to the public at large. Tell your family and friends, and lend a hand next Tuesday to help get the Gardens ready. Next Tuesday is also 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in the Gardens – come support your fellow Master Gardener Anne Pattullo as she explains how to keep your flowering plants floriferous this summer.

Coming in July is an opportunity for training in the First Detector program, part of the National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN). The purpose of this First Detector training is to educate volunteers and persons of interest to an emerging disease problem. Texas plant pathologists are looking for people that can act as eyes and hands on the ground for early detection of Citrus Greening. This disease is caused by a bacterium that is vectored by the Asian Citrus Psyllid. We have the psyllid in Texas, particularly in South Texas where it is hotter. The disease HAS NEVER been reported in Texas. This disease has been reported in FL and recently 2008 in LA. Plant pathologists are targeting urban areas because that is a potential avenue for the disease to show up in this state; that is through

ornamental type citrus or backyard (homeowner) citrus that may have been ordered or received from affected areas. Even though the larger impact of the disease is on the commercial orchards, the mode of entry of this disease may be from unsuspecting/unexpected avenues.

For some background on NPDN, go to <http://www.npdn.org>.

The training is tentatively set for the morning of July 14, probably here in the Extension office. So mark your calendars, be watching for details to come later.

We may have some opportunities to help one or more groups implement the Jr. Master Gardener program this summer and fall. If you would like to be a resource person that a teacher or group could call on for information or assistance, please contact me soon. This is a great program that engages youth in science-based learning while learning all about plants and gardening.

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**Master Gardeners - Please make every effort to file your volunteer hours reports on time every month.**

**Thanks - Keith**

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### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on April 29<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following..

The Home Garden Tour on May 1st. The price for the remaining calendars which will be on sale during the tour was reduced to \$1.00.

The Gardens Open House is scheduled for June 5th. MGs will be stationed in each garden to answer questions.

The IDEA Garden walkways have been mapped out by David Pierson. New curved walks in the upper garden are done and renovation of the other walkways will be done during May.

A "shed warming" in the Heritage Garden is planned following the May monthly meeting.

Keith has contacted Past-presidents to serve on a committee to consider the MG Emeritus program.

A committee will be formed to plan guidelines for handling money received during fund raising activities, for addition to the Policy/Procedure manual.

Discussed bulb propagation and growing bulbs for the bulb sale.

Discussed duties of State Directors, their state meeting attendance and reports to the Executive Committee.

## Plant of the Month

by Herb Coursey

The hardy vine **Clematis** (authorities insist we say KLEM-a-tis) is a member of the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae). Hybrids in Europe and England were developed from wild imports from China and Japan. The genus name comes from a Greek word meaning "vine." It is an enormous group containing over 250 wild species and includes garden hybrids developed during the past nearly 200 years. Most are woody deciduous climbers, though there are some evergreens. They include a huge variety of plant height, foliage effect, and flowers famed for differences of color, form, size, and bloom season. The leaf stalk twines into tendrils, and provides height ranges from 2-3 feet to over 20, depending on variety and growing conditions. Flowers have no true petals, but vary from four (petal-like) sepals to eight, and - in the "double" varieties - a vast number of small modified-stamen petal-esque derivations. Bloom size varies from tiny for some wild ones, to a possible 8-10 inches for developed varieties. There are 3 basic flower shapes: bell, broad-and-flat, or random-fluffy-clusters of tiny white flowers. Some of the species produce highly fragrant blooms, but hybrids don't. Large vines covered in clematis blooms are usually a gorgeous sight in spring or summer or fall. Clever pruning can extend blooming considerably. But! Unless it is one of the evergreens, in winter it is a genuinely ugly tangle of brown-black wiry bare stems. Ya gotta live with it, or whack it down! Now you know the worst. I grow my best ones on a sculpture made of railroad-ties. Easy. Others growing on trellises or garden "objects" look terrific too, until blooming is finished, and then they leave a considerable mess to clean up-and-away. Otherwise they spend the rest of their year looking like an outstanding dump.



But *we're gardeners!* Are we going to let that stop us? (*Here, insert time to think...*) If you feel squeamish, get hold of a catalog from **Wayside Gardens** or **White Flower Farm** or any other that has good advice and gorgeous color pics. I think you're going to order! Blue

Moon keeps some good varieties in stock: **Henrii** (8" white blooms), **C. x jackmanii** (4-6" rich purple and probably most folks' favorite), then there are others from the catalogs, esp. **Josephine** or **Rosemoor**.

Where? Plant them to grow upward, from a spot that is in sun; then plant 2-3 perennials close by, to nest their roots in cool shade. Clematis are quite resilient plants; you are unlikely to kill yours by pruning them "wrong." The very worst damage you could do by untimely pruning would be the loss of blooms for one year. Face it: they've not been told the pruning rules, and have done magnificently well

without pruning shears for thousands of years! **You're going to do OK!** See the catalogs for soil prep, pH, mulching but *never mulching growth stems*, planting, crown of plant 3-4" below soil, watering, occasional pests/disease, the pruning strategies, etc. Also: Google "How do I grow Clematis?" Most sources kind-of-agree. Trust those with larger, easy print.

Final word: Four years ago, a **C. x jackmanii** 3 mailboxes down the street got to me. It was living on *nothing*. I recognized it from catalogs and years of yearning. "Hey!" said I, "I'll bet I can grow that, too." Yep! Now when we go to Blue Moon, one of the ladies invariably greets us with, "**Hey! These are the people that can grow Clematis!**" Mmmmmm! - 'erb

## IDEA Garden News

by Sue Adee

The IDEA Garden is like the metamorphosis of a butterfly – ever changing.

Since the beginning of spring, much has been accomplished by the section leaders and other who have spent time working in the garden. I have listed below some of the major projects. However, a visit might be in order to see what has been done.

Along with replacing the cool season plants with warm season plants, one of the flagstone paths has been replaced and the second path will soon follow. David Pierson, with the help of Chris Steavenson, reworked the path by adding edging, put down a crushed granite base, relayed the flagstone and sealed the flagstone with cement. The improved path really looks nice.

Six large hanging baskets have been added to the pergola, thanks to Victor Long. Victor hung the baskets and installed a drip irrigation system to the baskets. These baskets will not only add beauty to the garden, but they will add another dimension.

The upper section of the garden has been redesigned, thanks largely to the insight of Cindy Harrington. With the installation of a new walk leading to a soon to be installed arbor and bench, you can walk through the garden ending with a spectacular view of the entire Rose Garden. Cindy flanked the entrance of the upper section with white Encore azaleas and lined the walk with perennials and annuals. This is a very nice addition to the IDEA Garden.

A big thanks needs to be given to the Rose Garden Staff. They have been very accommodating by delivering mulch, repairing the irrigation system and meeting other needs when requested. Our jobs would be a lot harder without their assistance.

It is sad to say goodbye to JoAnne Huffman who is moving to Colorado. JoAnne is one of the section leaders in the IDEA Garden and has been very active in the SCMG Association. We hate to see her go. She will be missed.

## Coffee Walking

by Anne Pattullo - President SCMG Association

I think spring is over and it is now summer, never mind the calendar!

One way I can tell is when I turn on the outside water, Ellie is right there to have a drink.



After tearing around the yard trying to catch the squirrels and the birds, she comes to the faucet panting. After several big drinks and a little water up the nose, she lays down under the Elm tree and watches me finish my rounds. The puppy stage is definitely over!

I wrote last month that I was worried about my gingers but I'm happy to report that they are all up and looking great! The only thing I haven't seen yet is the Firebush but I will give that until the first of June. At the rate the Yellow Bells is growing, it will be as big as last year in no time. Some things even seem to be early this year. My gardenias and Easter Lilies which usually start the first of June are blooming already. My biggest surprise, however, is several bright red blooms on my Stromanthe sanguine "Tri Color" which overwinters in the greenhouse and seems to love it there with a minimum temperature of 55 degrees. I put it outside in April in fairly heavy shade and keep it moist. I never expected it to be so happy it would actually bloom. As you can tell by the picture, the blooms are nothing to write home about but they are blooms, nevertheless!



The Home Garden Tour was wonderful! Thanks to Clayton and Pat Turner and their entire committee for a job extremely well done! Thanks, too, to everyone who volunteered in any way! The committee is already working on the tour for 2011 and has secured several homes. Jim Powell has invited our entire group to his cabin in the woods for a cook-out on June 10. We will get to wander his delightful garden one more time. Please email Ann Smith at [smithvae@aol.com](mailto:smithvae@aol.com) to let her know if you are coming.

Another event coming up in June is an Open House at each of our gardens at the Rose Garden. We will have docents there to answer questions about the plants used in the gardens. This will take place Saturday, June 5th, from 9:00 to 1:00. Please tell your friends and neighbors about this opportunity to get ideas for their own gardens. It would also be a nice place to take out of town guests for an hour or two. Pack a picnic lunch and stay and eat at the Rose Garden.



Looking ahead, we have two more major projects coming up. You will have an opportunity to sign up for both AgriWorld and the Fall Conference/bulb sale at the June meeting. Since we don't meet in July, once August is here, these projects will be in full swing. We need everybody's help to make all our events successful. Please consider joining one of these committees at the June meeting.

One more thing – the bus trip to Chandor Gardens was just perfect. Thanks and more thanks to Joanie Matthews for coming up with the suggestion and making all the arrangements! She even had breakfast for us on the bus! It was a time of great fellowship and of building enthusiasm for our organization. I hope this sort of trip can become an annual event.

## Take Cuttings Now

by Dee Bishop

Now, before it gets too hot, is the last chance to take cuttings of your summer annuals and spring flowering shrubs. When the night time temps get above 70-75, cuttings often rot before they can make roots. Find a nice shady place either in the shade of shrubs or trees and handy to a hose. I use a mix of half vermiculite and half perlite. Moisten the mix and place it in a container with bottom drainage holes.



Take cuttings about 3-4 in. long, clip off the leaves of the bottom two nodes and stick them into the mix. I do not cover with plastic this time of year because of the heat. Keep them moist but not wet and they will root in a week or two. Impatiens, petunias, almost any of your summer annuals will root easily.

Take 4-6 in. cuttings of the hardened new growth of shrubs and stick them the same way. Most of the late winter and early spring blooming shrubs will root easily. Hydrangeas are blooming now. You can root them as soon as the new growth is big enough. Oakleaf hydrangeas are easy to root when the side shoots on the bloom stems are large enough to stick, now through another 2-4 weeks.

You can root cuttings of herbs now easily. Rosemary is easy to root right now. Take a 6in. to 12 in. cutting, pull off the bottom leaves and stick it in the same mix.

Taking cuttings is a quick and easy way to increase your favorite plants or to share with others. Have fun!

## Bloom of Warmth

In winter, when most vegetation has recoiled into the earth, the plant "Helleborus foetidus" begins to bloom. How does it stand the cold? Scientists with the Spanish National Research Council found that strains of yeast living in the flowers' nectar warm the flowers up to 13 degrees Fahrenheit by metabolizing sugars. The yeast allows the plant to flourish even with low temperatures and little sun. The researchers call it a 'novel mechanism whereby flowers can raise their temperatures.'

From the May 2010 edition of Smithsonian magazine, thanks to Mary Hamlin

## Changes

**New E-mail** - Sue Clark - [sbclark@centurylink.net](mailto:sbclark@centurylink.net)

### New phone numbers

Sue Clark - 903-894-3218

Lynne Merryfield - 903-279-5565

**Clarification** - The e-mail address for Sunny Rogerson is [sunni1sobblue@att.net](mailto:sunni1sobblue@att.net) In the address book the number one appears to be the letter L.

## First Tuesday in the Garden

The last 'First Tuesday' presentation, before the summer break, will be on June 1<sup>st</sup> with Anne Pattullo presenting, "Wack it & Watch it Bloom." Noon at the IDEA Garden. The series will return on September 7<sup>th</sup> for the fall series.

## AmpleHarvest

Gary Oppenheimer, founder of AmpleHarvest.org hopes to connect 43 million hungry with 49 million gardeners throughout America. Backed and supported by the US Department of Agriculture, National Gardening Association, and many service organizations, AmpleHarvest.org helps nearly 1,800 food pantries in all 50 states receive fresh produce from local backyard gardeners. Visit [www.AmpleHarvest.org](http://www.AmpleHarvest.org) to learn more.

## Coming Events

**June 5<sup>th</sup> - Open house at the Gardens - 9AM - 1PM**

**June 26<sup>th</sup> - Fruit & Vegetable Show** - Tyler Farmer's Market (on Old Bullard at the Mall) Open to entries from the public.

## Master Gardener Specialist Training

**Plant Propagation Specialist** - August 26-28, 2010 Taylor County - Abilene, TX - registration deadline - July 30<sup>th</sup>

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

For those interested in details, contact Keith Hansen.

## 2010 Bluebird Symposium

Saturday, August 14, 2010 - 9AM-2:30PM

New Civic Center Lake Forrest Park, 1005 Hwy. 64 W, Henderson, TX 757652

Presentations by Keith Kridler and Greg Grant

Advance registration includes lunch \$10 - ends July 31

At door registration \$6 (no lunch)

Mail registration (checks payable to Texas Bluebird Society) to Andrea Brown, TBS Summer Symposium, 3689 Hwy.43E, Henderson, TX 75652



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