



MG Grapevine

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NOTICE
MG Association
Meeting
March 5th
Rose Garden Center

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March SCMG Meeting

Master Gardener Herb Coursey will introduce a camellia grafting project for our group using stock from the Tyler Rose Garden. During the meeting he will demonstrate the rooting technique and provide opportunities for interested individuals to participate in this ongoing educational project.

After Meeting Garden Tour

Following the March meeting we will visit Mrs Lee's garden. Thousands of golden daffodils are scattered over a 4 mile trail, meandering around two lakes, covering 28 acres.

Mr. & Mrs. Lee are the classic rags to riches story, becoming very wealthy during the oil boom. They purchased this land for it's gravel to pave roads, the airport runway etc. The gravel pits have since been turned into a 15 acre lake and a 3 acre pond.

A story has been told by some that Mrs Lee ordered a box of bulbs but received a boxcar load instead! However, Mrs Lee knew exactly what she was doing. Instantly Mrs Lee became a "valued customer". The company she bought the bulbs from sent a representative to assist in proper planting and care of the flowers. Mrs Lee, with 40 workers planted the bulbs over the next several years.

The garden's ability to remain open depends upon the number of people who visit and register their attendance. From 2500 to 6000 visitors are expected yearly.

To get to Mrs. Lee's garden drive north on US 271 until you are 7 miles north of Interstate 20. Turn east (right) on CR 3104. Drive a mile and a half, turn right on CR 3103, then continue one-fourth mile to the entrance sign. See you there! Joanie Matthews

Another Columnist

At one time Dee Bishop regularly wrote a column for the Grapevine, but gave it up to devote more time to family. Recently she advised that it was time for her to once again write her thoughts and advice for the *MG Grapevine* and it's readers. Her first column appears on page 2.

Anne Brown and Herb Coursey will also continue writing columns, alternating monthly. This month Anne's "Good Bugs/Bad Bugs" can be found on page 3.

Home Garden Tour



The Spring Home Garden Tour will be on May 2nd and already there is a lot of information available about it. Details on the five gardens that are open for the tour are on the

SCMG website. Go to "Coming Events" and scroll down to Tyler Home Garden Tours. Further details and pictures from the gardens will be available soon.

MG Training Class Schedule Change

For those Master Gardeners who choose to audit the training classes, there is an important change in the schedule. The ever-popular Dr. William Welch was originally scheduled to be in Tyler on February 24th, but due to a conflict he had to be rescheduled. He will be making his presentation on March 17th in the Extension classroom in Tyler.

First Tuesday in the Garden

The first presentation on the 2009 schedule will be on March 3rd at noon, when Mary Hamlin talks about Edible Gardening or "How to grow vegetables in your flower beds." The rest of the schedule for April, May and June is on the SCMG website.



I just took a chilly walk today through a couple of nurseries, and they are stocking up with fresh bedding plants, shrubs and trees to cure the disease known as Spring Fever. I think people are more interested in vegetables

and fruits than in recent past years, perhaps due to the economy, but probably as much for the satisfaction of growing their own produce. Attendance at recent educational programs that featured growing produce has drawn good crowds, and I have taken a lot of calls and emails from people growing a garden for the very first time.

While nursery hopping, I found some plants, 'Wakaebisu' azalea and 'Skypencil' Japanese holly, that are perfect replacements for overgrown shrubs in my front yard garden, plus a dwarf aucuba for the shade garden. I'm hoping that one of our area nurseries will carry the beautiful yellow-flowering, burgundy-foliaged dahlia (Happy 'Single Party') that bloomed non-stop all last

summer in the IDEA Garden. I also

resisted impulse buying a lot of other cool plants – no place to put them!!



Thanks to all the Master Gardeners who helped out at the East Texas Spring Landscape & Garden Conference. We appreciate your support and service, making such a large program run as smoothly as possible.

Don Who?

The International MG Conference is in Las Vegas at the end of March. On the program is a presentation entitled, "How to Drink Water from a Fire Hose" with the speaker listed as Don Davis.

Your crack investigative reporter has inquired and it is not our very own Smith Co. MG Don Davis or so he says. It does sound like a topic that Don might present. One wonders, is he sneaking off to Vegas and doesn't want us to know?

Garden Dirt

By Dee Bishop

Spring is about to be upon us and the busiest time of year in the garden. Finish amending the soil and get it prepared for the coming 'storm' of planting.

For those of you who plant tomatoes here's a tip or two that will get you off to an early start. Dig out a big space, 18" wide and deep enough to plant your tomato up to its top two leaves. Add some type of manure and plant your tomato. Put your big cage around it and cover it with row cover (or plastic). The row cover will give it several degrees of frost protection and can be left on til the weather is settled. It will also protect from drying spring winds, often as deadly as frost on the plants. March 15th is a good time to do this. The row cover is also excellent to keep insects and disease from cucumbers, squash, and flowers. You have to remove the cover to allow for pollination once the plant starts blooming, but this will help get it off to an early start and through April. Row cover is great for lettuce or other greens. It keeps bugs off and protects them from wind. You can have fresh lettuce longer into warmer weather.

It's good to be back! Have fun diggin' in the dirt.

Address Book

The new address book for 2009/2010 is being put together for distribution at the April MG meeting. Please check your information in the current book and if it has changed and you are uncertain that I have the change, please contact me via e-mail at mred2853@sbcglobal.net or by phone at 903-565-5441. Thank you - Martin Davis

Garden Club Flower Show

The Tyler Area Council of Garden Clubs will have their annual flower show on March 20-21, 2009 at the Woman's Building on Broadway. If any Master Gardener would like to enter a potted plant or a cut specimen, please have it at the building after 8 AM and no later than 11 AM. There will be people who can help fill out your entry card/s.

For those who would like to see the flower show, it is open to the public free of charge on Friday, March 20th from 3-5 PM and Saturday, March 21st from 10 AM to 5 PM.

Work Day in the Garden

Effective March 3rd, the work schedule will be each Tuesday, starting at 9 AM. The spring period in the gardens is especially busy, thus lots of help is needed.

See you in the gardens?





Cindy's Comments

President, Smith Co. MG Association

Is it only me or are there others? What do you do when a stem breaks off one of your favorite plants? Me, I hurry to find a suitable pot or transplanting spot and attempt to start another plant. It doesn't matter that I already have four or five pots going of the same thing. I just can't seem to let that stem or dying plant go to

the big compost pile in the sky. Same goes for my gardening books and magazines. Why can't I just read them and then pass them along to someone else? I've got boxes of them, and I actually like to reread them. What didn't interest me at all last year when we lived in town, now seems to be one of the best articles this year since we've moved outside of town.

Or could it just be a memory thing? Maybe it's because my parents lived through the Great Depression? They used every part of everything, they were recyclers before recycling was cool. They had a wonderful garden and my mom made most of our clothes. Or maybe it's because I've always had a soft spot for the weak and the underdog. I've been known to adopt a homeless cat (who ended up being in the motherly way) and through the years several dogs as well. Whatever it is, do you think I'll ever outgrow it?

What an informative Spring Landscape & Gardening Conference on February 14th! At the top of the list for me was the demonstration on air spading, that was fascinating. Neil Odenwald was great and Keith's presentation on the updated plant list also hit the mark. Since we are in the process of building and plan to incorporate rainwater harvesting, Dottie Woodson's session was particularly interesting. Daniel Duncum reminded me of what Keith taught in MG class about planting trees. There's that memory thing again. Hope you were able to attend and enjoyed it as much as I did. A special thank you to those who worked registration, hospitality, education, lights and put together the folders. My handouts have now joined forces with previous year's, making a nice collection of their own. The committees for the Main Street Flower Market and the Home Garden Tour are hard at work for these upcoming events and could use your help. Isn't it great to be a part of a group that has so much to offer?

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

PS: The Executive Committee has been visiting area nurseries working to secure a discount for SCMG members. Find out which ones have agreed at the March meeting. See you there!

Good Bugs/Bad Bugs

by Anne Brown

While digging in the soil at the Heritage Garden I saw a Wireworm. Wireworms (yes, one word) can be both beneficial and a bad pest depending on the species. They are found in almost all of North America with the species *Conoderus* the most common in the southeast United States.



Wireworms are the larval stage of "Click Beetles". They can be soft-bodied or hard-bodied and are segmented so they are included in the millipede group. They have three pairs of legs behind the head.

Wireworm colors are light brown, yellow-brown or orange. The adult Click Beetle is a dull black or brown and may have spots or patterns depending on the species. Click Beetles received their name because of their ability to flip over after being on their backs, often accompanied by a clicking sound.

Click Beetles and/or wireworms are not a pest to humans but a dozen or so species are definitely pests to many agricultural crops, including grains, germinating seeds, plant roots, seedlings and root crops. In the spring female adults lay eggs in the soil around food sources where the eggs hatch after several weeks. The larvae spend their time in the soil feeding by tunneling into plants. Larvae over-winter in the pupate stage in the soil. Some species can take up to four years to mature but most of the species in the southeast US mature within a year. The longer lived species are usually in damp soils where there are cooler temperatures.



The Galveston County Master Gardeners have an interesting website on beneficial insects with pictures. Betty Gray (Class of 2006) has an article on the Click Beetle *Alaus oculatus*, or Big-eyed Elater. This species is actually a beneficial insect in the garden because its larvae are meat eaters preying on wood boring beetles, flies and other pests. The adult Big-eyed Elater has two false eyes on its back but the real eyes are actually located just behind the antennae. Thanks to Betty and Galveston County for this information. Compiled: Galveston County Master Gardeners, Texas Insects, Drees and Jackman Garden Insects of North America, Whitney Cranshaw

Entomology Specialist Training

The 2009 Master Volunteer Entomology Specialist Training will be held September 28 - October 2, 2009 at the Texas AgriLife Extension Service Montgomery County Office, Conroe, TX. This years training will be hosted by Dr. Paul R.Nester, Extension Program Specialist, Houston/Metro area, and the Montgomery County Master Gardeners. Registration fee of \$300.00 includes collecting kit with lots of goodies; lectures; Extension bulletins; 3 lunches, 1 dinner, snacks & drinks. Transportation and lodging is on your own. Course is limited to 25 applicants; deadline is July 18, 2008.

Wood Co. MG Spring Conference

On Saturday March 7th at the Mineola Civic Center, Mineola, TX. Registration 8 - 8:30 AM. Fee \$5.00.

Speakers are Dr. William Welch, "Southern Heirloom Gardens" and Kenny Rollins, Texas Agrilife CEA, "Moles and Gophers in Landscape & Pastures". Tours: Mineola Nature Preserve, Gov. Hogg Park, Botanical Gardens & Arboretum, Quitman. Exhibits: Garden Art, Plants, Bulbs, Jewelry & more.

For more info. - Call 903-473-3656 or e-mail pmartx42@yahoo.com.

Gregg Co. Garden & Landscape Seminar

2009 Garden & Landscape Seminar sponsored by the Gregg County MG Association.

Date: Saturday, March 7, 2009 Time: 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. Location: First United Methodist Church Faith Center 400 N. Fredonia, Longview, Texas Whaley Street Entrance. Fee: Advance Tickets \$10.00 At the Door -- \$12.00. Speakers: **Dr. Neil Odenwald**, PhD, Professor Emeritus Landscape Architecture - Louisiana State University. Dee Bishop, Smith Co. Master Gardener.

For more information call 903-236-8428.

Texas MG conference - April 23-25, 2009

Information on the conference is available on the web at a **new location** which is <http://2009tmgc.org/>.

Insects

<http://citybugs.tamu.edu/index.asp> A great website for insect or bug identification.

Recommended book for *Pest Management in the Landscape, an Introduction* by Christopher J. Luley.

Contains high quality images and concise descriptions explaining the impact on plants from insects, mites pathogens, animals, humans and environmental conditions.

For more information, go to: http://www.urbanforestryllc.com/book_decayfungi.asp

State Rainwater Conference

The Texas Rainwater Catchment Association will hold its first statewide conference on March 20-21 in Kerrville at the Kerr County Hill Country Youth Exhibit Center.

Individual fees for the State Rainwater Conference are as follows: March 20 fee is \$50 with an additional \$10 added for those going on the Boerne tour. The March 21 fee is \$5. Both days are free for children under 16 years old. Find registration information at: www.texrca.org.



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