



MG Grapevine



<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

March 2014

<http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu>

Number 3
Volume 21



Inside This Issue

Keith's Column	2
Garden Lectures	2
Busy Gardening Month	3
Know Your Officers	3
Executive Committee	3
Gardener's Dream	4
Thank you	4
Coming Events	4



MG Association Meeting
March 6th
Rose Garden Center
11:30 AM

MG Grapevine Staff
Martin Davis, Editor

MG Grapevine Contributors:
Dee Bishop, Anne Brown, David Gary, Keith Hansen, Mary Claire Rowe, Jean Smith and Pat Welch.

Published for the Master Gardeners of Smith County, Texas under the auspices of the Smith County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, 1517 W. Front St. Tyler, TX 75702.

Educational programs of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension are open to all individuals without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.

Extension Office
Phone - 903-590-2980
Fax - 903-590-2984

SCMG Association Meeting

VP Pat Welch advised that the program for the March 6th meeting will be:

"The State of the Union"

This is not an address by President David Obama Gary, but rather an update by our MG Project Leaders on his/her project. Information on each project and the opportunities to participate, will be provided.

Look in the back of the MG Address Book (page 26) and you will find a list of Projects. Have you wondered what a project is all about, but were afraid to ask? Come to the meeting and get your question answered.

1st Tuesday in the Garden Lecture Series

"First Tuesday in the Garden" presentations will begin on Tuesday, March 4, 2014. The programs begin at Noon in the I.D.E.A. Garden located in the southeast corner of the Tyler Rose Garden with parking outside the southeast gate. In case of inclement weather the program will be moved inside the Tyler Rose Center Building.

The March topic is **"How to Build Your First Vegetable Garden"**. Items that will be discussed are site selection, soil preparation, selection of plants, maintenance and how to keep the garden free of pests and diseases.

ET Garden Lecture Series

Location, Location: Right Plant/Right Place & Ask the Designer

March 22nd at 9 AM at the Rose Garden Center, **Keith Hansen**, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension horticulturist will discuss selecting the right plants for landscaping projects for long-term success. This will be followed by **Laurie Breedlove** of Breedlove Landscape Nursery and **James Wilhite** of Wilhite Landscape fielding your landscape design questions.

David Gary sez..

My fellow Master Gardeners,

I hope everyone is excited about getting their home landscape ready for the Spring planting season. I always look forward to this time of year. I just planted a new Dogwood this week.

The 2014 East Texas Garden Lecture Series started February 22nd at Chamblee's Rose Nursery and continues on March 22nd at the Rose Garden Center. The price is \$15.00 per program or \$45.00 for a season pass to all seven Lecture Series Programs. This is a great deal. The list of the Programs is on page 2 of the this newsletter and on the SCMG Website.

The current Master Gardener class is invited to attend our March 6th meeting. Please help them feel welcome.

Sheryl Rhodes has agreed to head up the Home Garden Tour Project this year. We thank her for volunteering. Anyone who can help her with this please contact her ASAP.

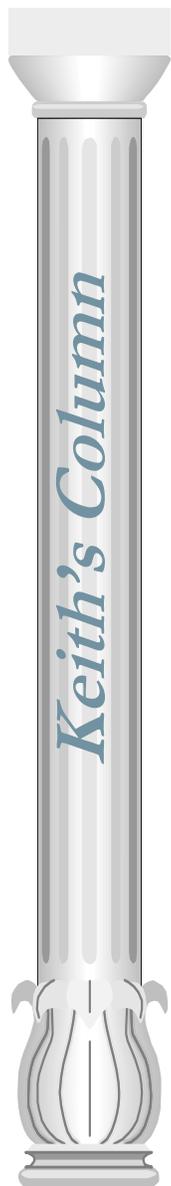
We still need Project Leaders for AgriWorld and the 2015 Calendar. You will have all the help you need from Master Gardeners who have done this before. We need new people to be more involved. Many of the veteran Master Gardeners have done these projects multiple times.

Sincerely, David Gary, President



Changed E-Mail Addresses

Joyce Napolitano - joycenapolitano@suddenlink.net
Barbara Null - barb.nulls0636@icloud.com



Hopefully we are in a warming trend as I think most of us have had quite enough of this chilly/cold winter weather. Most varieties of fruit trees should have had their chilling requirements easily satisfied by now, and once it warms up, they will burst into bloom.

Keep your fingers crossed that we don't have significant freezing temperatures once the majority of fruit trees are in bloom or finished blooming. If you are curious about how many chilling hours we have accumulated thus far, go to the etweath-er.tamu.edu website and check out the Chilling Hours section. Depending on which method is used to calculate the hours, we already have between 970 and almost 1350 chilling hours. Our recommended fruit variety list on easttexasgardening.tamu.edu lists chilling hour requirements for peach, plum and blueberry varieties.

I have two new projects this year where I need Master Gardener assistance. The first is help preparing the soil and planting some new varieties of camellias and rhododendrons in the Rose Garden. We have 6 camellia varieties, and 4 varieties of rhododendrons (planting 3 of each variety). These are all part of the Southern Living Plant Collection series. This project will probably require 2, or maybe 3 sessions to prepare the soil and plant the plants. My goal is to have this done before the end of March.

The other is a longer term project involving a national trial of ornamental native grasses. Overton is one of 12 nation-wide trial sites, and is going into its 3rd year in the ground. There are 19 cultivars of *Panicum virgatum* (Switchgrass) and 6 cultivars of *Schizachyrium scoparium* (Little Bluestem), with 4 each of everything planted in a randomized design for statistical evaluation. The

Perennial Plant Association named *Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind' as the 2014 Perennial Plant of the Year™, which is just one of 19 cultivars in this national trial. Dr. Pemberton needs help with maintaining the trial area to help keep the weeds at bay, which will involve one or more work days this spring and summer to deal with the weeds and apply mulch around each plant. Also, I will be doing a monthly evaluation of the plants, taking data on several characteristics. For that aspect I would like 1 or 2 helpers. We are anticipating the trial will be a highlight at this year's Horticulture Field Day at Overton.

If you would like to help out with either project, please let me know by email. I will collect names and let you know details for the projects later this month.

Here is a heads up on the 1st Texas SuperStar promotion for 2014. 'Tycoon' Tomato will be promoted in March as a Texas SuperStar. According to Extension horticulturists, Tycoon is an exceptional large round tomato variety. The plant is determinate



and is known for its heat setting ability as well as its resistance to tomato yellow leaf curl virus. This particular virus has become a major problem in the fall the past few years as the virus is transmitted by white flies which have become worse due to the serious drought conditions across most of the state. In addition the plant is resistant to Verticillium, Fusarium races one and two, tomato spotted wilt virus as well as nematodes. The fruit is firm and actually more oblate than round. Plant in full sun for optimum production; height is three to four feet high and two to three feet wide, and has a determinate growth habit. It is suggested for both garden and commercial planting.

Thanks, and have a great gardening month!

East Texas Garden Lecture Series



The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service – Smith County, invites you to participate in 6 seminars, (see below). Q/A session is scheduled at the end of each session. Registration is \$15 (or \$45 for a season pass to all 6 Lecture Series programs). **All programs register at 8:30 AM and start at 9:00 AM.** Lectures approximate 2 hours unless noted. All programs will be at the Tyler Rose Garden Center.

- Mar 22 – "Location, Location, (Right Plant/Right Place)". Keith Hansen. & "Ask the Designer". James Wilhite, & Laurie Breedlove
- April 12 – "A Warm Welcome – Using Containers and other Tips for Curb Appeal". Dee Bishop
- May 17 – "Saving Water with a Drip" - Drip irrigation basics and applications. Dotty Woodson and Brad McCullough
- Sept 13 – "Enjoy Your Home Landscape - Make Your Yard Fit Your Life". David Gary, Master Gardener on Wheels
- Oct 25 – "Forgotten & Underutilized Plants for East Texas". Greg Grant
- Nov 15 – "Japanese Maples" & "Adapted Trees for Every Landscape". Dave Creech



A Busy Month In The Garden

By Dee Bishop

If you haven't finished whacking back all the frozen perennials, grasses, liriopse, aspidistra, ferns, etc., better get a move on. As often happens after a severe winter, spring is determined to get here a little too early. All those things will start greening up if they haven't already. Of course be ready to throw some pine straw, leaves, etc. over tender new growth if winter decides to rear its ugly head again.

Vegetable and herb gardens are in full swing, harvesting winter veggies and planting early spring ones. Wait til April to plant summer things. Nights that are too cool will cause diseases to attack stressed plants.

I have been thinking about curb appeal a lot and why and what it means to different people. There are three types of people who look at curb appeal differently.

Number one wants nothing more than to make his yard and house attractive to passersby or visitors. Number one is often young and busy raising a family, working hard with little time for family and recreation. He wants his place to look nice but to be easily maintained. He could also be older but uninterested in gardening for whatever reason. He just wants his property to be as attractive as any other around him.

Number two decorates his house and his yard to impress others.

Number three wants his place to be his very own retreat and sanctuary and if others love it so much the better. Number three, may be any age, but gardening is an activity he loves. He knows what plants his property will support, how much time he has, and he also loves to approach his driveway to be 'welcomed' by a beautiful landscape. He hopes others will enjoy it too, but his primary purpose in keeping his grounds beautiful is for his own enjoyment.

What does curb appeal mean to you? Think about it. Of course we all tend to put our best foot forward if we are selling our house. We see on HGTV all the time how important first impressions are to a buyer. You can decorate inside and out to your heart's content as long as your money lasts, but all the time and money in the world cannot put 'love' in the picture and that is one thing that impresses anyone who ever comes in contact with your home or yard. A 'home' cannot be bought for any amount of money. Like love, 'home' is all heart and a 'home' attracts everyone.

What kind of curb appeal does your place have?

Executive Committee Notes

The committee met on February 20th:

Planning for a one-day regional conference for April 2015, with an out-of-town key speaker is underway and encouraged.

Sheryl Rhodes is chairing the Home Garden Tour project. Jean Smith asked the board to thank Sheryl and to support her in this effort. Three houses have committed and David Gary is seeking two more.

Leaders are still needed for the Calendar Committee and for the AgriWorld project.

Pat Welch advised that the March meeting program will be a "State of the Union" presentation. Sue Adey expressed concern that the project leaders be aware of policies and procedures.

Harvey Collen reported that he had attended the TX State Director's meeting, which had focused on the cost recovery issues.

2014 SMITH COUNTY OFFICERS

President  David Gary	VP/President Elect  Pat Welch	Treasurer  Bob McRae
Assistant Treasurer  Jean Smith	Secretary  Pat Turner	Historian  Bill Kelldorf
Parliamentarian  David Pierson	Executive Committee  Trudy Menke	Executive Committee  Charlie Colman
State Director  James Showen	State Director  Harvey Collen	
Alternate State Director  Hazel Bateman	Alternate State Director  Mary Green	

Know your officers and give them your support.

TIPS

To kill a very persistent weed; cut the bottom from a plastic bottle, place it over the weed, spray with an herbicide, replace the cap and let the sun's heat finish it off.

To straighten a bent tine on a spading fork: pound a piece of 4 in. diameter pipe 3 ft. into the ground leaving 1 ft. above ground. Place the tine in the pipe and slowly bend it back in shape. (Very good to know.)

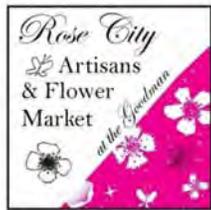


Gardener's Dreams

By Mary Claire Rowe

Recently, I was in Tucson, Arizona, visiting family. We always love to go to the Farmer's Market on Saturday at a local retail center near their home. Vendors come from all around, and the variety of goods is just amazing. First, a cup of locally ground coffee is in order. Then, a fantastic pastry, mine was a chocolate croissant, has to be chosen and devoured. Nothing like a cool morning and lots of sunshine to whet the appetite. Locally raised meats, honey, vegetables of all kinds, dried fruits and vegetables, homemade soups, frozen for use later, the list goes on; all were available. I was really impressed with a woman who had Heirloom seeds for sale. She said she had been growing and selling seeds for many, many years. I was able to reign in my appetite for a rather modest number of seed packets. I thought of my wonderful grandmother, Mable Shannon, who had every conceivable vegetable and fruit that can grow in Texas in her immaculate, abundant garden. Even into her 90's, she had her little garden. She was just amazing.

I envisioned a fantastic vegetable garden of my own for this year. Yellow Pear Tomatoes, Mexican Grey Zucchini Squash, Super Sioux Tomatoes, Straight Eight Cucumbers, and Royal Burgundy Bush Beans. I know I have more seeds than my little garden can hold, so I plan to give some to interested friends. I can just see it now: Lovely lush green vines growing up stakes along the back fence: cukes, beans, and squash. Tubs filled with bright red and yellow tomatoes standing in front. My fig trees producing in abundance, and the harvest is actually mine, and not the sweet varmints, who usually get them. My blueberry bushes producing more than three berries, and morning cereal piled high with the juicy treat. My strawberry plants delighted me each morning with a handful of sweetness. Aaah! What a dream. What are the chances? I will keep you posted.



March 21 - 22

10 a.m.-4 p.m.
At the Goodman-LeGrand Museum
624 North Broadway Avenue, Tyler, Texas 75702

Thank You!

Thanks to the 2014 Master Gardener class members and all the other Master Gardeners who came to help with the rose pruning in the Heritage Rose Garden last Tuesday.

The Rose Garden Crew

2014 Spring Garden Gala Day

At SFA Nacogdoches

April 5th—9 AM

Dawn Stover and Greg Grant will present "Upcoming Plant Sale Preview-Picking the Best of the Best" at the **March 13th** SFA lecture. Lecture begins at 7 PM, refreshments at 6:30 PM.

Faces at the February 6th SCMG membership meeting.



Mentors and students enjoy lunch together on February 13, 2014



Photos by Martin Davis