



MG Grapevine



<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

May 2014

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SCMG meeting
May 1st
Rose Garden Center
11:30 AM

MG Grapevine Staff
Martin Davis, Editor

MG Grapevine Contributors:

Dec Bishop, Anne Brown, David Gary, Keith Hansen, Mary Claire Rowe and Pat Welch.

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Extension Office

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SCMG Association Meeting

The program for the May 1st meeting will be presented by Patsy Besch. Her presentation subject will be "Herbs". Patsy was a member of MG Class 4 and has been talking about herbs every since.

New Address Books

The new 2014-2015 books were available at the April luncheon. For those who didn't pick one up and was not at the luncheon, you can still get the book. Many additional copies are in the MG office in a lower desk drawer.

So far we have had no reports of errors found in the new books. If any are found in the future, please advise Martin Davis.

One reported change is a new phone number for **Shirley Stephens**. The new number is **903-539-5066**.

Awards & Honors

At the annual MG luncheon on April 3rd awards were presented for activities in 2013. To see of the award winners go to: <http://txmg.org/smith/about/awards-recognition-3/>.

MGs with most reported hours in 2013:

With more than 100 hours; D. Bishop, C. Colman, G. Dobbs, K. Dobbs, R. Duncan, E. Muxworthy, A. Pattullo, A. Rathbone, J. Showen, A. Smith and C. Steavenson.

With more than 200 hours; H. Bateman, M. Colman, M. Davis, D. Gary, and C. Harrington.

With more than 300 hours; J. Matthews and J. Smith.

With more than 600 hours; Pat Welch. No

wonder she is the Master Gardener of the Year!



David Gary sez..

Friends,

Finally spring is here. The forecast for the coming week is in the 80° range and the lows are predicted to be in the 50s and 60s. I will be replacing the sweet potato vine that I planted too early. This is a reminder that spring in Texas is unpredictable and frosts can occur well into April.

I am sorry that I missed our April meeting. I was in Ennis, Texas presenting my program, "Master Gardener on Wheels," to the Ennis Independent School District Retired Teachers Association on behalf of the Smith County Master Gardeners. By the way, Ennis is the home of the Bluebonnet Festival during the month of April. Mark it on your calendar for next year!

On another note, the Project leaders need a lot of volunteers to help. This is a great way for the interns to get their feet wet, so to speak. It is also a good way for Master Gardeners to get in their volunteer hours. We need people who are willing to pitch in and help these important projects be a success.

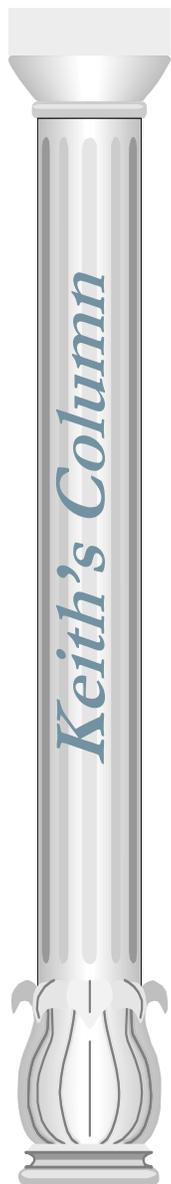
Be sure to attend the next East Texas Garden Lecture Series, "Saving Water with a Drip -- Drip Irrigation Basics and Applications," on May 17 at the Rose Garden Center. This program will be presented by Brad McCullough, a licensed irrigator with Ewing Irrigation. I hope to see you there!

In the meantime, have a "blooming" May.
Sincerely - David Gary, President

1st Tuesday in the Garden

The first Tuesday lecture series continues on May 6th at noon in the IDEA Garden. MG Nelda Stanley presents the May topic, "Butterflies & Hummingbirds".





Service. I'm really proud of your accomplishments and **THANK YOU** for your dedication to AgriLife Extension educational programs.

Still looking for some evaluators for a new national rose evaluation program with the goal to identify superior rose varieties for the home garden. Rose variety evaluation sites are being installed in several parts of the U.S., including the Tyler Rose Garden. The program is called A.R.T.S. – “American Rose Trials for Sustainability”. This program is taking the place of the old AARS evaluation program, and promises to be more rigorous in identifying roses that are sustainable or Earth-Kind. The following is from the ARTS website: “To identify, through regional evaluation and testing under low input conditions, the most disease and pest resistant, hardiest and best garden-worthy rose cultivars and to provide objective, accurate and reliable information about the cultivars tested for each region to industry and the public.”

If you are interested, there will be an evaluator training webinar in the near future – let me know A.S.A.P. if you'd like to find out more.

Speaker's Bureau. Thanks to all who volunteer to give talks to various groups in our area. These are such an important part of our educational mission of teaching adults and youth about gardening. Please remember, if you give a talk to any group, large or small,

young or old (or in between), report to Susan Nelson afterwards, no later than the end of the month. You also need to include that event in your regular monthly reports to Martin. Be sure to include how many you spoke to, adult/youth/& demographics.

Here we are with another cool spring. Everything seems to be delayed 2 to 3 weeks. Lots of partial freeze damage to some plants, including roses, pomegranates, and an assortment of other plants. When more than one person asks the same question, then there are probably a bunch more that haven't asked. One of those questions is about impatiens downy mildew. This has been a serious problem in past years. I'm hoping growers have gotten a better handle on it and that plants now available are hopefully free of the disease. IF however, you have been planting impatiens in the same bed in successive years, you really should switch to something totally different. “Crop rotation” is just as important with our annual bedding plants as it is with vegetable crops. Otherwise, you build up disease (or insect) pressure in that location.

Horticulture Myths: For an interesting perspective on many gardening recommendations you may have read or heard, Dr. Linda Chalker-Smith, one of the “Garden Professors” has her own web site entitled “Horticultural Myths”. She takes a recommendation, and checks out scientific literature to see if any actual research has been done to validate those recommendations. Check it out sometime, it can be interesting reading: http://puyallup.wsu.edu/~linda%20chalker-scott/Horticultural%20Myths_files/ (or, Google “horticultural myths” and it should be the first link in the list. She is also one of the 4 “Garden Professors” - an interesting blog that discusses ornamental horticulture, often times in a light-hearted way: <http://blogs.extension.org/gardenprofessors/> Happy Gardening!

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Master Gardener Composter Specialist Training

Hosted by Bexar County – San Antonio—(210) 467-6575—Training Location at San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio, TX 78209-6635 -June 18, 2014 (Wed) - June 20, 2014 (Fri) Registration Fee is \$225. This includes 2 lunches, 1 dinner, snacks, and other goodies.

Payment and application must be in their office by Tuesday, June 3rd. Cancellation must be made no later than Tuesday, June 3rd; thereafter, a \$100 surcharge will be incurred.

Master Gardener Composter Specialist Training program is designed to train and certify Master Gardeners to become part of a state corps of compost experts and educators. To become a certified Master Gardener Composter Specialist, the Master Gardener is required to attend and complete the Master Gardener Composter Specialist Training to fulfill training requirements and subsequently meet service requirements.

For more complete information on requirements and how to register, talk to Keith Hansen.



CYPRESS MULCH? THINK TWICE

By Dee Bishop



I recently read an article in Louisiana Gardener Magazine concerning cypress mulch and how the ever increasing demand for it is threatening our native cypress forests. These beautiful cypress forests (swamps in reality) are being decimated by this great demand.

What has happened, cypress mulch started out being a by-product of the lumbering industry---a way to use all parts of the tree. They would turn the by-products, mainly bark and fragments of the trees unusable for lumber, into mulch. That was a good thing since there was no waste and the mulch from the mature trees was really good and long-lasting. Enter GREED and things changed. Cypress mulch became the preferred mulch and unscrupulous people began cutting every cypress tree they found, even the very young ones and shredding them for mulch. Some of the Gulf Coast states mainly Mississippi and Louisiana began seeing the devastation to their cypress swamps was beyond belief and have called a screeching halt to the sale of cypress mulch in their states. They have appealed to all other coastal states to heed the warning and wake up to the great devastation that is taking place all along the coastal areas.

Cypress swamps have been in existence for eons of time, growing where few other trees will grow, aerating the otherwise foul swamps, cleaning the waters and marshes, thus providing a suitable habitat for multitudes of wildlife that exists in these swamps. Cypress swamps are the very necessary ingredient to a healthy coastal environment. Without the swamps, the fish, shrimp, and crab industry would die, not to mention the serene beauty they add to the areas that would otherwise be mud holes. I know, I lived at the edge of one and growing up there, saw the magnificence of these tall moss draped trees and enjoyed the myriads of wildlife they supported.

What to do? Let's stop using cypress mulch today. Let's tell others why we no longer use it, and be a part of saving another piece of our natural heritage. If we don't buy the mulch, they will stop cutting the trees. The sad thing is the mulch from the whole young trees is not even good. It breaks down quickly and does not last long like the old mulch made from bark.

I hope Texas will join the other states in banning cypress mulch too. Losing our swamps would be devastating.

Glorious Days

By Mary Claire Rowe



These perfect spring days keep calling me to come out and play in the garden. Fearing severe allergy attacks from the extremely abundant pollen, I have hesitated. Making only brief forays to accomplish an urgent task, I have stuck to my plan of waiting. Well, pretty much stuck to the plan. I did spend one day, week before last, washing the front porch and changing the couch cushion covers, foolishly thinking nature had declared an "all clear." The porch looked nice for about two days. Then, the oak trees had their turn. Of course, I will have to remove the covers, wash them, and start all over again.

There is hope. The black walnut trees have awakened. They are almost through with pollination and have put out tiny little green leaves. A volunteer yaupon has bloomed and is dropping its little blossom parts. Oak tassels have covered the earth in great waves. The combination is a challenge to those of us who would like to actually see our walks and patios. Finally, help is on the way. Another spring rain is coming soon to wash it all away, or at least into our lawns and flower beds. This biomass will enrich the earth and make better growing conditions for our plants.

Yesterday, I threw caution to the winds and boldly went where I wanted to go: the overgrown shrubs along the back fence. Neglected for years, they have grown rank and tangled. Tired from their labors, they rested along the top of the fence; weighing it down and making replacement necessary sooner rather than later. Taking giant clippers in hand, I soon filled six trash cans. It was quite cathartic. A wiser gardener might have waited for the cleansing rains. However, sometimes wisdom just does not stand a chance against that primal urge to garden.

Executive Committee Notes

The committee met on April 17th at the Extension Office.

The Home Garden tour needs volunteers to distribute flyers and posters. The tour, on June 7th, will include four homes.

AgriWorld will once again have Jean Smith and Hazel Bateman providing leadership. The simplified exhibit will include three sections (instead of five) which will be more interactive. Set up will begin on September 2nd.

The MG Cookbook will be titled "Flavors from our Gardens". Ann Smith reported that over 200 recipes are in hand, with a goal of 300. The committee would like more recipes using fresh garden vegetables and herbs.

Plans are underway to have a Plant Sale in the spring of 2015, replacing the Home Garden Tour for 2015. The sale will be a one day event in the Rose Garden, near the MG gardens. There is a volunteer to order plants for the sale. The date has not been set, but it will necessary to make certain that it does not conflict with the SFA spring plant sale.

The printer in the MG office area will be replaced.

Keith Hansen has mapped out the location for 27 rhododendron trial plants. He will soon need volunteers to plant them. One of Keith's major goals is to find more permanent plant ID markers for the MG demonstration gardens, fulfilling the MGs educational purpose.

Certified MG Moves to Tyler

This Master Gardener just moved here from Hunt Co. and will be joining our group. Her address & phone are:

Maury Hudson

14425 Wilscott Dr.

Tyler, TX 75703.

Phone 903-262-4343.



Be sure to welcome her when you have the opportunity.

COMING EVENTS

1st Tuesday in the Garden
May 6—noon- IDEA Garden



Nelda Stanley presents *Butterflies & Hummingbirds*

East Texas Garden Lecture Series
May 17-9:00 AM- Rose Garden Center

Brad McCullough presents *Saving Water with Drip*

Brad is a licensed Irrigator with Ewing Irrigation. He will explain and then show how a drip irrigation system can be easily installed to save you time and money.

MG Home Garden Tour
June 7-9 AM-3PM



A unique opportunity to view four private gardens and landscapes. This year's gardens showcase a variety of landscaping styles and methods, ranging from a woodland setting to an intimate garden.

For more information on the tour, go to

<http://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>

Tickets \$10 in advance

Horticulture Field Day

June 26-Texas A&M AgriLife Research
and Extension Center at Overton

From 8:30 AM—3:00 PM

Tour of Ornamental Field Trials plus Presentations

Texas Master Gardener Conference
September 25-27



The 2014 Texas Master Gardener conference will be held in Odessa, hosted by the Permian Basin Master Gardeners.

Visit the website for more information

<http://2014tmgaconference.org/>

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference
October 21-24

Inviting all gardeners! 2014 Southern Region MG Conference at Baton Rouge. For information and registration go to...

<http://www.southernregionmgconf2014.com/>



New Master Gardeners

