



MG Grapevine



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The next SCMG Meeting

April 7, 2016
Rose Garden Center
11:30 AM

MG Grapevine Staff

Martin Davis, Editor

MG Grapevine Contributors:

Charlie Colman, Sam Griffith, Margaret Herring, Mary Claire Rowe, Jeanette Ross, Jean Smith, Susan Stone, and Kyle Tengler.

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SCMG Association Luncheon

April 7, 2016

The April 7th MG meeting is a luncheon which involves no MG Association business. The meeting will include awards, certification of Class 22 interns and introduction of Class 23, our new interns.

As for the lunch, it is a potluck event with the association furnishing the drinks. Those attending should bring their choice of a casserole, salad or dessert. Don't forget to bring a serving utensil.

Dues are Overdue

The 2016 SCMG annual association dues were due on January 1, 2016. Most of you have already paid your dues, but a small number of you have not yet done so. Our Treasurer Jeanette Ross will still accept your check for \$20 at the April 7th luncheon. Those who are somewhat inactive and on medical leave should also pay dues.

Address Book 2016-2017

The new Address Book will be available at the April 7th luncheon. Please look up your name and check for any error. Notify Martin Davis of any needed change.

We have one new e-mail address which came to us too late to put in the book.

Nancy Martin nancymartin133@yahoo.com

Tuesday Work Day in the Gardens

During April—each Tuesday

Start time 10:00 AM

Susan Stone Sez....

It's always amazing to me what a big impact a little sunshine and rain (OK, a lot of rain) can have on the garden. My azaleas and irises are in full bloom and beautiful, but the most spectacular thing is my white loropetalum. This plant has basically just been occupying space for four years, doing nothing, just sitting there. And then this year, WOW. It's covered in white fringe blossoms. Absolutely gorgeous. I never expected it, which made it all the more exciting.



Speaking of WOW. I expect we'll see the "wow factor" at work in May when we visit the gardens on the Home Garden Tour. This year's tour promises to be a good one, so if you haven't signed up to work, please do. And thanks to Margaret Herring and her team for all their hard work on this.

Remember that April 7 is our annual Graduation Luncheon at the Rose Garden Center. Eighteen new Master Gardeners will be certified and new trainees will be recognized as they start their certification journey. It's also a time to recognize you, our fellow Master Gardeners, for all the work you do through the year. Only because so many of you are willing to go the extra mile do we have such a thriving organization!

Hope to see you at our monthly meeting on April 7.

Susan

1st Tuesday Lectures

The 1st Tuesday series presentations continue in April and May. Each are at the IDEA Garden at Noon.

They are:

April 5, "Bullet-Proof Plants" - Andie Rathbone

May 3, "Keeping Chickens in the City" - Sandy Pannett

Kyle Tengler comments....



I got a call from an extension agent in a neighboring county in March. He called me to let me know that they had a confirmed case of Rose Rosette in Wood County and the Northern part of Smith County. What is Rose Rosette? Rose Rosette is a disease thought to be viral and most likely spread by the Eriophyid mite.

Why is this concerning? Plants infected with a virus will need to be destroyed. There are no current treatments for them, and the only way to insure they don't spread further is to remove them altogether. There is a lot we still don't know about Rose Rosette, but transmission of the virus has been observed with these mites, as well as by other means like using infected tissue when grafting. Some of the symptoms of the virus are deformed leaves, excessive thorns, abnormal red coloring in shoots and foliage, among others. The deformed leaves are also seen with herbicide damage. If you think you might have Rose Rosette, bring a sample of the tissue showing the effects to the extension office so that we can determine more certainly if Rose Rosette is the issue. If you think you may have the virus in one of your roses, disinfect any pruning equipment you used on that plant following use.



Photo by Dr. Mike Marchant

For prevention, examine new roses at the nursery for any damage or mites; do not purchase any materials that show any signs of infection (especially clearance plants)! If at all possible, plant bushes far enough away that their canopies are not overlapping, don't make it any easier for any potential mites to travel between plants. Always clean and disinfect pruning tools between plants. Wild multiflora roses are particularly susceptible to this disease and can be a vector for the spread of the virus. If you have them on your property, keep a close eye on them and consider removing them, especially if you see any symptoms.

Home Garden Tour

This year's gardens are super nice. Two of them were completely put in and maintained by the home owners. One, that is in Hollytree West, is on a cul-de-sac and the back is very large and has a pool. One is a garden home in the Cascades and is on a narrow lot and is a delight to see. It has many Japanese Maples. Another is also in the Cascades and is on a hill with many levels of plantings. It is a wonderland. Margaret Herring

The tour is on May 28th 9 a.m. till 3 p.m.

Houses on the tour are:

- 527 Pam Drive Buddy & Mary Ann Scudder
2115 Holly Creek Dr. Danny & Rebecca Burks
4486 Cascade Shoreline Dr. Dr. Karen Wies
4350 Cascade Dr. Lew & Louise Anderton
810 W Ninth St. David Hays

Overton Field Trial Project

Many Master Gardeners have expressed an interest in working at Overton on the bedding plants trial project. I would like to explain the details of how this project works.

For the spring trial, Dr. Brent Pemberton and Will Roberson at Overton start to receive seeds from nurseries around the country in January and early February. The Master Gardeners will start to plant starter flats with the seeds. The seeds will sprout and start to grow. After a few weeks, the seedlings will be transplanted into six packs or four inch pots for further growth. Finally, the plants are planted in the evaluation field where their growth progress is monitored weekly for a final evaluation report that is given back to the seed companies the following year.

The first two steps in this process take place between the middle of February through the middle of April. The planting of the evaluation field takes place between the end of April to the beginning of June. And, as most of you know, the Overton Field Day takes place on the fourth Thursday in June where the current year plants can be viewed in the morning. Dr. Pemberton gives his final report from the prior year's plants in the afternoon. The field day is attended by representatives of the participating seed companies, local growers and nurseries, horticultural media and Master Gardeners from all around northeast and central Texas counties.

The first two steps in the process are performed at the Texas A&M Overton campus. On the north side of the campus property are 6 greenhouses and a steel building referred to as the headhouse. The headhouse is located exactly in the middle of the greenhouses. The planting of the evaluation field takes place approximately 4.5 miles north of the Overton campus at a plowed field leased by Texas A&M expressly for the bedding plants trial.

Currently, on the primary list that I send out notification of work at Overton, there are 34 Master Gardeners. Each and every one on the list has been on the list for several years, some as many as 20. Many of these Master Gardeners only work at Overton for their certification hours. When we work at Overton in the headhouse, we physically cannot work with more than 20 people since there just isn't enough room to accommodate more people. However, when it comes time to plant in the field, we are not limited for space since the fields are many acres of open land and we can use the help.

For those interested in helping plant the fields, please let me know if you would like to be included in the notifications. I can be contacted by email at monechas@msn.com or at 903-565-0600. And, I will be glad to answer any other questions you may have. Thank you, Charlie Colman.



Spring Has Sprung!

By Mary Claire Rowe

Oh, what glorious days we have been having! We gardeners cannot contain our desire to go out into the garden and dig, plant, transplant, clip, mulch, etc., etc. Even though we had a late light frost, right before Easter, most plants have enough energy to survive with gusto.

So many surprises have been in store for me this year. A sweet bluebell bloomed and I had forgotten that I had planted it. This is true for several bulbs. That is what I like about them. Through the years, I have planted hundreds of them, of all varieties, and so each spring it is a great pleasure to see them come alive.

When I first became a Master Gardener, I was amazed to learn that bulbs do produce seeds, as well as off-shoot "bulb-ettes." So, I gathered the paper thin seeds from a beautiful amaryllis that produced them, and soon I had dozens and dozens of bulbs. I gave some away at the MG meeting and planted many. It is great to see them coming up again each year.

My husband and I are downsizing soon, and it will be a challenge for me to see how many different plants I can squeeze into a much smaller garden. I am eager to do it, as I find bending and stooping to be too much to do for now. Any amount of garden will do for someone who loves plants as I do. Perhaps small-garden growing will turn out to be the best after all. We shall see. Happy April.



The committee met on March 17 at the Extension office where they considered and discussed the following:

Preparations for the May 28th Home Garden Tour are well under way. Fliers are expected to be available at the April 7th MG luncheon.

The committee, who is beginning work on the 2017 MG Calendar, has met. The cost and expected sales were presented. The necessary budget modification was approved.

The SCMG's will not be participating in the Spring Flower Market at the Goodman museum.

The 2016-2017 Address Books have been completed and are currently at the copy shop. They will be ready and available at the April 7th luncheon.

A note will be put in the MG Grapevine advising that the 2016 dues can still be paid, for those that have not already done so.

BREWS AND BUZZY BITERS

By Sam Griffith



A big topic in today's agriculture, especially among smaller, niche farmers, and among consumers, is locally grown (grown within 100 miles of the consumer) food, and its adherents are called "locavores." Locally grown vegetables, as well as locally produced beef, chicken, lamb and pork are highly sought items at local farmers' markets.

But have you considered skipping your box of Lipton or Luzianne tea bags and growing your own tea? Locally grown "crafts" teas can bring in big money. One producer, "Light of Day Organic Teas" in Michigan sells its white tea for \$256 a pound, or \$32 for 1.5 (one and a half) ounces. Wow! That's some real money.

But there are a couple teeny-tiny potholes on this gilded road to tea-funded wealth from your backyard garden. First, it takes 70,000 (yep, you read that right: seventy thousand!) hand-picked leaf buds to make a pound of white tea. And it takes about five years for your tea bush to grow large enough to endure repeated harvests.

Okay, maybe I won't become a tea plantation millionaire. Heavy sigh.

Enough fun, now for the serious topic - the Zika virus! Zika virus is spread by mosquitoes (mosquitoes are what we Master Gardeners call the "vector"), including a variety of mosquitoes indigenous (including the *Aedes* mosquito that feed/bite in morning and late afternoon and evening hours) to the southern United States, ranging from the Texas to Florida coastline up as far north as Missouri to the Mid-Atlantic states. That includes east Texas.

The Zika epidemic has begun in the United States: Florida Governor Rick Scott has expanded the declared state of emergency to five Florida counties because of the Zika virus. Earlier this week, Palestine in next door Anderson County announced that it has begun spraying for mosquitoes to attempt to thwart the peril from Zika.

The Zika virus can cause pregnant women to bear children with very small brains (microcephaly), and may be linked to increased dementia, and LORD knows what else. The peril is so dire that one Central American country has advised all women of child bearing age to avoid having any children for two years, I guess in the hopes there may be a cure by then.

The present epicenter of the epidemic is Brazil, the site of the upcoming Summer Olympics. And guests and athletes to the Olympics will return home to spread the disease to their home countries around the world. The U.S. Olympics organization has issued Zika virus warnings to America's athletes, and a number of U.S. female athletes have announced they are foregoing the 2016 Olympics because of their (well founded) fears of getting the Zika virus. Mosquito-spread cases have been reported across the Caribbean, eastern South America, Central America, and in Florida. And the virus can be spread sexually, where a person is infected in South America or the Caribbean and returns to the States and infects another, as happened in a recent case in Dallas.

Are you concerned yet?!? Well you should be very concerned for your health, and the health of your family. And you and your community must be pro-active to help prevent the spread of the Zika virus.

So, empty those water-holding containers. I came across a tub of water on the farm a couple days ago. In just a week of warm rain, the water was teeming with wiggly mosquito larva.

And put on insect repellent spray. And avoid being outside in the morning and early evening when the mosquitoes are out looking for dinner -> that is you. And some folks suggest ingesting brewer's yeast, suggesting something in the brewer's yeast makes you less tasty to the mosquitoes.

As they used to say on the "Hill Street Blues" television series: "Let's be careful out there."

Looking Ahead...

April 1 & 2, 2016—Troup FFA Plant Sale 9 AM to 5 PM at 927 Arp Dr., Troup, TX

April 2, 2016—Dr. Joe Masabni “Aquaponics” 8 AM The Garden Lecture Series at the Tyler Rose Garden Center.

April 2, 2016—Harrison Co. MG Plant Sale at Marshall, TX 8 AM to 2 PM - 105 N. East End Blvd. (US Hwy. 59)

April 2, 2016—Spring Garden Gala Plant Sale at SFA at 9 AM at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St., Nacogdoches, TX

April 5, 2016—1st Tuesday in the IDEA Garden, noon with Andie Rathbone, “Bullet-proof Plants”.

May 3, 2016—1st Tuesday in the IDEA Garden, noon with Sandy Pannett, “Keeping Chickens in the City”.

May 17 to 19, 2016—2016 TX MG State Conference at McKinney, TX (see information at the right).

May 28, 2016—Tyler’s Home Garden Tour. 9 AM to 3 PM Five home gardens open to tour. (See page 2 of this newsletter.)

2016 Texas MG State Conference

The Texas MG State Conference May 17 to 19 at McKinney, TX. At the Myers Park & Event Center. Visit the website, www.ccmgatx.org/txmg2016 for up-to-date information.

Cost for the three day conference is, \$200 and after April 17, 2016 \$225. There are no one-day packages.



Attention MG Project Leaders

We Master Gardeners volunteer on various MG Projects and often have little information about what others are doing at other projects. With this in mind, a brief story in the MG Grapevine (like Charlie Colman’s comments about the Overton Project) can keep the rest of us informed.

We invite input from any project which we can publish in the MG Grapevine. Just send your information to me, Martin Davis, Editor. mred2853@sbcglobal.net Thank you.



Girl Scout Troop 3367 is working on their Bronze Award. 4th and 5th grade girls complete a project to earn this award. The girls decided to design and create a butterfly garden at Camp Tyler. Anne Pattullo and Jean Smith led them on a tour of the IDEA garden to discuss garden ideas, how to amend their garden site with good soil and host and nectar plants for butterflies.

Pictures from two of the home gardens on tour in May. More to come in the May MG Grapevine.

