



MG Grapevine



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July 2013

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MG Association Meeting
No meeting in
July

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Something New



The East Texas State Fair is holding a Horticulture Show this year during the fair. The general public, youth and adults, are eligible and encouraged to enter to show off their work at the NEW Horticulture Show. The show will feature potted plants, container gardens and beautiful functional table displays.

Entry check-in will be at Harvey Convention Center South Hall on Friday, September 27, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Go to:

http://www.etstatefair.com/events_detail.aspx?id=61 for more details.

AgriWorld

There will be another planning meeting in mid August. There is a need for people to set up various areas, teachers, anyone who is willing to give a few hours of their time.

Fair dates are Sept 20-29 and set up will be during the month of September.

We can always use silk flowers, plants, garden related items that you might be discarding.

Contact Jean Smith with questions and/or to volunteer.

New on the SCMG Website

Missed the gardening columns in the Tyler newspaper? You can now go to <http://txmg.org/smith/> and click on Newspaper Columns where there is a link to Keith Hansen's blog which includes his weekly newspaper column.

Dee Bishop's column is shown there for easy reading with archives to previous columns.

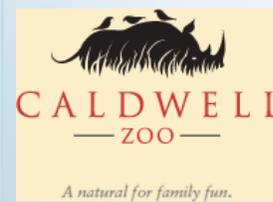
SCMG Association Meeting

July is the one month of the year when there is no association meeting.

Vice-President David Gary advises that the August meeting will be at the Harvey Convention Center.

Looking Ahead

An old friend, Keith Mills, will present the program at the August SCMG meeting. He will be talking about Tyler's Caldwell zoo where he is in charge of the grounds.



A natural for family fun.

Fall Vegetable Seminar

Presented by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service & Kaufman County MG Association Saturday July 20, 2013 - 8:00AM Registration & Booths, 9:00AM - 12:00PM Program at First Baptist Church, Kaufman, TX

The program includes:

- **Fall Planting** - What to Plant & Where to Find It - Kaufman County Master Gardeners
- **Mediterranean Herbs** - Susan Clark & Arlene Hamilton, Ellis County Master Gardeners
- **Canning Your Harvest** - Renee Word, Kaufman County Master Gardener
- **Vermicomposting & Soil Preparation** - John Lawler, Owner-Operator, Worm Wranglers

Cost is \$5 per person. For information and to pre-register, call 972-932-9069 or e-mail sbburden@ag.tamu.edu.



Summer time means vacation time and water time. If you are taking a vacation, you might enjoy going to public gardens in the areas you are visiting (I'm sure your spouse would like to visit, too). I find it fun and inspiring to visit gardens in various regions, to get ideas and see new plants, even if we cannot grow them here in east Texas. The National Gardening Association has partnered with the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) to provide you with a database of their member public gardens across the country. Note that not all institutions and public gardens are members of APGA, but this is a great starting point. You can search for the location of a specific garden, or for a list of gardens in a particular area by city, state, zip code, or any combination of them. Here is the link to the search site: http://www.garden.org/public_gardens/

Watering becomes one of the main tasks in keeping our gardens looking good during the summer. Here are some weather stats (thanks to Dr. Bob Peter's site on KTBB.com) as of the end of May: 1.97 inches less than normal year-to-date precipitation; and 89.8 % of normal year-to-date precipitation. As of June 24, precipitation was 2.64 inches for the month, and year-to date precipitation is 19.92 inches. Rain is not in the immediate forecast. The National Drought Monitor is a useful site to visually see state, regional and national

drought conditions. Here is the map for Texas, which shows Smith County in severe drought conditions as of June 18:

http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/DM_state.htm?TX,S – you can also find at this website the short and medium range outlook for temperature and rainfall.

Last year I asked you Smith County Master Gardeners if you are using some sort of drip system, soaker hose or other low flow technology. I'm requesting this information from you again. If you are using some sort of trickle or drip system, please send me an email (khansen@ag.tamu.edu) with the following information: What kind of system you are using, product being used, how long you have been using it, benefits and problems you have had using it, and what you would do differently. Also, please let me know if you would like training on drip technology, and what specifically you would like to learn.

Also, if you have a rainwater harvesting system, I would like to hear from you. Please provide me with the same information (type of system, how long you've had it, benefits/problems).

Watch your health this summer by taking precautions while outside gardening. Wear a hat, long-sleeve shirt and sunscreen to reduce your risk of skin diseases. Drink plenty of water, and take frequent breaks. Don't let heat exhaustion sneak up on you! And wear mosquito repellent to reduce the chance of being bitten and contracting West Nile Virus.

Plants From Around the World

By Jim Powell



Chinese Ground Orchid *Bietilla striata*. The Chinese Ground Orchid is also called Hyacinth Orchid, Peacock Orchid, White Chicken or Hardy Orchid. This orchid originated in China and Japan. It has the reputation of being the absolute easiest orchid for a beginner to grow. I guess that is why it is one of my favorite plants. Dividing its rhizomes, tubers, corms or bulbs propagates this orchid. Bloom time ranges from mid spring to late spring in our area. The plant grows from 18" to 2' in height and produces colorful magenta or near-white blooms.



Banana Shrub *Michelia figo*. This deciduous/evergreen shrub is a native to a large range of western China. It's closely related to the Magnolia. It was introduced to America in the 1700s where it became very popular in the South. The sweet fragrance of its 2" creamy-yellow blooms, shaded with purple, resembles bananas. This led to its common name, banana shrub. Its scent rivals the highly fragrant Plumeria used in Hawaiian leis. It grows from 6 to 10 ft. tall and 6" wide and displays narrow, glossy leaves throughout the year.



by Dee Bishop

BEWARE HOUTTUYNIA!

Houttuynia cordata, locally known as chameleon plant or hootenanny plant. This little plant entered the U.S. in the late 80s and early 90s as a beautiful little nursery plant that everyone 'had' to have. The variety most often sold was 'variegata' which had lovely heart-shaped leaves colored in green, white, and pink. We procured some for our bog area in the IDEA Garden and watched it grow. Nothing makes it happier than good moist soil so it went crazy growing and growing until we had to declare war on it. By the way the plant turns green after the first year and becomes rather ordinary looking.



We tried digging the plant out only to have it return – pronto. We sprayed it with Round-Up, it looked dead but returned with vigor. We found the plant in the bed in the upper garden beside the patio and decided it couldn't go anywhere there, and did provide a pretty groundcover. It covered that area, then we found it up in the garden and knew we had to aggressively fight it. We have been----for three years! This little plant monster grows very deep and rapidly and worst of all --- it seeds out!

I am writing this to those of you who have 'enough' greedy little plants that want the whole garden. The bad thing about Houttuynia is it grows so deep that you can't pull it out. I have always considered a plant okay if I can pull it up where I don't want it. It's the deep rooted plants that aggressively spread that we need to beware of planting in our yards---not just for ourselves but for the environment as well. Think --- Kudzu!

New Address

I wanted to let you know that I have moved to Portland, OR and will not be able continue activities with the Smith County Master Gardeners. I have enjoyed the time I have spent with all of you. You were all truly wonderful friends and family to me.

You brought support and joy to me through difficult times and I am blessed to have had your companionship.

My new address follows:

5005 SW Mitchell St. #5

Portland, Oregon 97221

Regards and happy gardening - Janet Cacho

Executive Committee Notes

At its meeting on June 21st the Executive Committee discussed and considered the following:



Charlie Colman noted that the possibility of ordering SCMG shirts from an outside source, rather than the local source that has been used for several years, would be cost prohibitive. Since *Embroid Art* has many choices in shirt fabric and color, it was decided that one person is needed to work with *Embroid Art*. The decision needs to be made by October so that shirts can be made available to the incoming class.

The Home Garden Tour was successful. According to Jean Smith, the number attending was about the same as last year. Since sale of ads in the tour book were very good, the income has increased. It was decided that future tours will be on the first Saturday in June. While there is still the need for an overall chairman for the 2014 event, Merlin Eck has agreed to chair the preview/selection subcommittee for next year.

Joanie Matthews advised that the Calendar committee has developed a new journal format for the 2014 calendar. They are quite excited about the format and project new interest in calendar sales. This format emphasizes the educational value of the product, in that it is not just a calendar since the format provides more space for information. An increase in the budget for production of the calendar was approved. Pat Welch has agreed to handle sales.

Since there is interest in a White Elephant sale for the members, it was decided to hold the sale following the November membership meeting. Advertising in the MG Grapevine will give the members time to gather their items for sale.

A possible bus trip to the Dallas Arboretum was discussed. It should be in the fall, after the new Children's Garden is opened. David Gary will check into the best dates and arrangements will be made following a determination of the date.

Cindy Herrington has once again volunteered to host a picnic at her home this fall. Cindy will set the date and Ann Smith will be asked to coordinate the potluck for the event.

The SCMG association traditionally does not have a membership meeting in July and this year is no exception. The next association meeting will be on August 1st and it will be in the Harvey Convention Center room (instead of the normal Rose Garden Center room).

The next Executive Committee meeting will be on July 19th at the Extension office.

2013 JMG® Specialist Training

Williamson County Ext. Office 3151 SE Inner Loop
Road, Georgetown, TX July 23-25, 2013

With your help, the National Junior Master Gardener® Program is growing good kids by igniting a passion for learning, success, and service through a unique gardening education. To support your efforts, a dynamic and intensive 3-day JMG® Specialist Training will be held July 23 – 25, 2013. The JMG® Specialist Training is designed to assist those coordinating or supporting JMG programs at the local and regional level.

Registration Cost: \$275 (\$300 after July 2, 2013)

Only two registrants per county association please.

For more information and registration forms, go to:

<http://txmg.org/williamson/special-events/>

**2013 TX Master Gardener Conference
October 17—19, 2013**

Hosted by Cameron & Hidalgo Counties. Experience the Blooms, Birds and Butterflies. The 2013 conference will be held at the McAllen Convention Center, McAllen, TX.

Registration is now open. Links to register online are at <http://2013tmgaconference.org/>

Landscape Design School Series XXIII, Course III – September 23-24, 2013

Sponsored by the Texas Garden Clubs, Incorporated & Texas AgriLife Extension, Texas A&M University Landscape Design Course III will feature some of the best and most popular instructors from the past as well as an outstanding featured speaker for our “outside” topic.

Registration materials may be downloaded from: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/LDSep13/> or requested from Mrs. Karin Wallace, Department of Extension Horticulture, 225 HFSB TAMU MS 2134, College Station, TX 77843-2134, by telephone (979) 845-8565 or by e-mail at KMWallace@ag.tamu.edu. Registration for the course will be \$125 (including two lunches).

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