



# MG Grapevine



<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

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**SCMG Association Meeting**  
**June 1st**  
 At the Rose Garden Center  
**11:30 AM**

**MG Grapevine Staff**  
 Martin Davis, Editor

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### SCMG Association Meeting June 1, 2017

SCMG will meet at the Rose Garden on Thursday, June 1, at 11:30AM. After a short business meeting those going on our "field trip" will depart. We will be visiting Waldo Way, a Guernsey Robotic Dairy farm in Mineola. I recommend we carpool and take as few vehicles as possible. Bring your credit card to purchase fresh dairy products. It is recommended that you bring an ice chest to bring home any goodies you may purchase.

There are a couple of restaurants in Mineola we can have a late lunch at for those wanting to take the time for food and fellowship.

For those not wanting to visit Waldo Way, Ed Bryant will be speaking on transitioning our gardens to the summer.

Wayne Elliott

### SCMG Home Garden Tour



It is almost time. Rain or Shine on June 3, the SCMGs will gather at five wonderful gardens in Tyler to open them to the public. The homeowners have all been working hard to have their gardens in spectacular shape. Andie Rathbone is keeping garden tour notices alive on Facebook and you can help. If you are on Facebook, go to the Smith County Master Gardener page and **SHARE** the post about the garden tour. You can **LIKE** the post also but to reach the maximum audience, you must **SHARE IT**. Publicity is key to a successful event.

The tour is from 9:00-3:00 and there is still a need for afternoon volunteers. It is not too late to help. If you can join us, please contact Jean Smith, [smithjean17@hotmail.com](mailto:smithjean17@hotmail.com) and we will assign you a garden. Thank you to all of the volunteers who have helped to put together another great garden tour.

### Susan Stone Sez....



Well, the year is almost half gone. Time does fly, doesn't it? As I write this, the Home Garden Tour is fast approaching. Based on the pictures I've seen on Facebook and in the newspaper, these gardens are truly exciting. Hope you get to visit each one. Special thanks to Jean Smith and her team for all the hard work in making this year's garden tour a success.

Some well-deserved congratulations are in order. First, to Becky Wilson for winning the First Place - Outstanding Individual TMGA Award for 2016. SCMG was also awarded First Place in Written Education for Electronic Media (Facebook and Website) thanks to fine work by Andie Rathbone and Martin Davis. And third place awards were received for Educational Program (AgriWorld, "Our Secret Garden") and for Outstanding Association for all of us! And, of course, thank you to our writers: Anne Pattullo, Jean Smith, Andie Rathbone, Wayne Elliot, and Mary Hamlin.

Someone else got an award this past week. Greg Grant won the Texas Parks and Wildlife Lone Star Land Steward Award. I think that's the coolest thing; check out the You Tube video if you get a chance.

Hope to see you at our next meeting, June 1 and at the Home Garden Tour on Saturday, June 3.

Susan Stone, President

**Notice**—Work Day in the Gardens begins at 8:30AM, each Tuesday, starting in June..



by Greg Grant

May has been a traveling nightmare with a trip to Mississippi to speak to their state Master Gardener Conference, a professional development trip to South Louisiana with our Texas County Agent's Association, a trip to Austin for a Texas Parks and Wildlife awards banquet, a trip to Dallas for mandatory Extension training, and a trip to Lubbock for my first Extension Horticulture retreat with all my fellow Texas A&M horticulturists. I've managed to avoid Lubbock for 54 years but that stretch is now over. I even cancelled a trip to the Southern Garden History Society's annual meeting in Lexington, Kentucky for Lubbock. My fellow SGHS members weren't happy since I'm a lifetime member of that group and serve on the board of directors.

Unfortunately all the travel plus the usual plethora of spring gardening inquiries has put me hopelessly behind on e-mails, phone calls, and writing assignments. I need help. Having two different e-mails is problematic for me so I'll limit myself to my Texas AgriLife e-mail from here on out to simplify things. Trying to answer and return phone calls has also been very difficult with at least a week's lag time resulting in disgruntled clientele. I could very much use some help here. It has never seemed fair putting new interns on help desk phone duty since they know the least. This generally results in more messages stacked on my desk along with those from the secretaries.

Here's what I'd like. First, I'd like a volunteer to keep up with the non-stop list of phone call questions that need returning. This person could update the list, farm it out to the Master Gardeners manning the help phone, and make a note of when they are returned and resolved. Otherwise they frequently get buried in lost e-mails and deep stacks on the desk. Second, I'd like seasoned Master Gardeners to man the help desk, not interns. Having an intern pass the question on to me is no different than having a secretary do the same. One of the main reasons the Master Gardener organization was formed was to help urban agents deal with phone calls. I know because I was the county horticulturist in San Antonio and helped write the first handbook. To be helpful it's necessary to research the questions, find an answer, and get back with the caller to provide it. Many are more interested in talking than the actual solution. Most of the answers can be found online at Aggie Horticulture, Aggie Turf, and Dr. Jerry Parsons' plantanswers.com where they provide the answers to past questions in a searchable format.

Because of the popularity of gardening, horticulture questions drive each county agent's office insane each spring, even year around in larger counties. When I was in Dallas years ago we had three phone lines dedicated to horticulture! Many of the questions are repeat questions and occur in

batches at the same time each year. This year San Augustine grass issues have dominated. We have two publications that cover all they need to know, plus soil test kits and disease diagnostic lab info to share.

I also need a volunteer to help me with PR. There are two formats I need it in: a poster for posting on Facebook and even more importantly a narrative to send out to my e-mail group, magazines, newspapers, and newsletters. I can provide the format. I just need somebody to put them together and send them to me ready to go.

I also need somebody to manage our dormant East Texas Gardening web page. Unfortunately I don't have a spare moment left after writing my weekly column for the Tyler Morning Telegraph, my monthly blog, my regular *Texas Gardener* magazine article, my tips for our office newsletter, my column in the *Magnolia*, and my daily Facebook postings. If somebody would manage the page, I could send them my newspaper articles, PR, and tips to post when I send them out to others. Making matters worse, I volunteered to write the plant materials section of the new Master Gardener handbook. It's due now and I haven't started. HELP!



Congratulations to Greg Grant on his award --- **Fifth Generation Shelby County Landowner wins Texas Parks and Wildlife Land Steward Award.** Click on link to see video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hlh6kVge1DU&t=183s>

### T.A.R.G.E.T Program

T.A.R.G.E.T stands for *TISD's Academic Resources for the Gifted and Talented*.

The T.A.R.G.E.T. program, located in Gary Elementary School, is committed to providing academic, emotional, and social growth opportunities for the gifted and talented elementary students of Tyler ISD. Emily Keane, a third grade teacher at T.A.R.G.E.T Academy was awarded a grant by the Smith County Master Gardener Association for improvements and projects in their school garden. She meets with each class once a week for hands on gardening experiences combined with the science of cooking by learning to prepare what they grow. Ms. Keane is looking to incorporate the Learn, Grow, Eat, Go program into her curriculum with help from the SCMG. Greg Grant has worked with Emily during this school year.

T.A.R.G.E.T. strives to meet the unique needs and challenges of these students to prepare them to be life-long learners in a rapidly changing society through a program which encompasses higher order thinking skills, creative/critical thinking, problem solving, inquiry, and research.

## Summertime, And The Livin' Is Easy

by Sam Griffith



As George and Ira Gershwin wrote in 1934: "Summertime, and the livin' is easy, Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high"

So as we roll into the summer, George and Ira Gershwin summed up our garden-focused lives (likely without the cotton, though) as our diligent spring planting and weeding and watering has produced bountiful crops and lots of flowers and the "green, green grass of home" (as good ol' "Curly" Putman wrote and Porter Wagner sang).

It's been an interesting spring, and summer will likely be a roller coaster, too. It got warm too early, and some perennial crops are coming on early, too. My peaches were in full bloom in January and the trees were leafed out in February. Then frosts and cold snaps, so no peaches, right? Nope. A few weeks ago, my brother told me my trees were loaded with peaches. Unbelievable! After all the frosts and cold weather, I couldn't believe any peaches had survived.

So I went and checked - I bet there were three bushels of large, gorgeous reddish-and-gold peaches. But the peaches were still a little green and hard. So I decided I would wait a couple days and go back and harvest my peaches on Thursday. But then Wednesday night, we had a little rain and some strong winds. The next morning, I loaded up a few bushel baskets and headed to orchard, looking expectantly towards the trees. But I saw just a few red balls up on the trees. Oh, yeah, the wind had shaken the trees and the peaches had fallen. So my gaze fell to the ground under the trees, and then I paused when I realized the grass under the trees had been trampled down. My heart sank. Them durn feral hogs had shown up just at the magic moment . . . and had eaten all of my fallen peaches! Grrrrrr!! So I pulled the few unripe peaches still on the trees. I harvested maybe three-fourths of a bushel of peaches. Heavy sigh.

"Summertime, and the living' is problematic and The fish may be jumping, but the hogs are eating my peaches." Not Gershwin, but a bit more accurate on my farm.

But the vegetable crops are coming in great. The tomatoes are ripening on my more than two hundred tomato plants, and I have almost an acre of peas and beans. I've got "giant Peruvian lima beans" and pinto beans and Kentucky Wonder Beans and "burgundy beans" and Blue Lake green beans and purple hull peas and zipper cream peas and black crowder peas. And so on. But like the evil hogs in my peaches, the deer are already trodding up and down the rows of succulent peas and beans vines, awaiting the magic moment when they will can begin nibbling my crops. You know, when I took the Master Gardeners course, we were told how to defeat the bugs and fungi that would hurt our crops. But they never gave us a clue about thwarting a sounder of feral hogs or a herd of deer. Maybe wild four legged critters are not a common problem in the big city, but they can vex a country boy.

Later this summer, I will be traveling to Uganda to teach modern farming techniques to subsistence farmers who live in mud huts with thatch roofs, and who farm just like their ancestors have for millennia, scraping out a bare living using just a hoe. And we may be fabricating farming equipment with a vision of manufacturing the equipment to dramatically enhance the productivity of the Ugandan farmers. Friday, I traveled to Waco to look at some two-wheel garden tractors, and Tuesday, I'll be meeting some people to discuss the trip. As you can tell, I will be quite busy for the next several months, and out of the country some. So I won't be writing another Master Gardener column until September.

So let me give you some quick summer tips:

1. Remember to begin to plant your fall vegetable garden around the first August.. Yep. It's hot and dry and feels like a totally un-fall gardening season. But you count the days until harvest and so you plant in August. You just get a big glass of ice cold water, and a big straw hat, and go out and begin to plant the fall garden.
2. Remember to do sequential plantings of some vegetables. No matter how carefully you care and nurture for some plants, like squash, it seems they just slow down after a month or two of production. So just plant a few more hills of squash and such about now, to carry you into late summer with fresh vegetables.
3. Mulch your plants so all the water you put on your plants will stay there and not quickly evaporate.
4. Pray for rain - - we are far behind on our rainfall. When I was returning from Waco, I saw a "fire ban" sign in Trinidad, just about fifty miles west of us. It is dry, and we need the rain. And if we don't get some plentiful rains soon, we'll be seeing "fire ban" signs in Smith County. So pray for rain.

So, until September, keep on gardening, and I'll see ya'll in the pea patch. **Sam**



The Executive Committee met on May 19, 2017. The following action items were discussed:

**Budget Modification** – The Committee approved \$1,000 to fund modifications to the storage shed in the IDEA Garden.

**2016 Audit Report** – The Committee accepted the recommendations as outlined in the Audit Report for 2016. Recommendations focused on better recordkeeping and documentation related to project income and expenses and stricter adherence to policy on expense authorization.

**Scholarship Policy** – The revised policy on Scholarships (No. 3011) was approved which includes the creation of a separate Scholarship Fund which can accept outside donations. The policy will be posted online shortly.

**Bylaws** – The Bylaws subcommittee is continuing its work. Final revisions will not be ready until sometime this fall.

**Project Status** – All projects are being successfully managed and are on track to meet deadlines



## Smith County MG Home Garden Tour

Saturday, June 3—9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Tickets \$10 in advance \$15 day of tour

A complete list of the homes on the tour is on the SCMG website at <http://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>

## Horticulture Field Day

Thursday, June 29, 2017—Free Admission

**Location: Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Overton**

### Field Tours

**8:30 am** Registration opens at the **East Farm Area**

**8:30 – 10:30 am** Tour of Ornamental Trials at the **East Farm Area**

### Field Tours

**10:30 – 11:45 am** Tour of Ornamental Trials at the Demonstration Garden at the **Main Building**

**Lunch 11:45 am – 1:00 pm** Sponsored BBQ lunch by the arbor at the **Main Building** (Texas A&M AgriLife Center).

### Presentations

Brent Pemberton: *Outstanding Performers at the Overton Trials*

Jenny Wegley: *Great Plants at the Dallas Arboretum*

Susan Wainwright: *Using Biological Control in Production*

Dottie Woodson: *Rain Barrel Demonstration*

For more info.—<http://flowers.tamu.edu/field-day/>

## JMG SPECIALIST TRAINING

There will be a JMG Specialist Training August 1-4 in Denton County. Please see the website below for registration and hotel information.

<http://dcmga.com/events/2017-junior-master-gardener-specialist-training/>.

## 2017 East Texas Garden Lecture Series

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service invites you to their 2017 Garden Lecture Series. Registration will begin at 9 AM.

Ticket Information: Single tickets on sale the day of the lecture are \$15 per person.

Sep 9 – Pella-legna Vineyard/Winery “In Vino Vertias” at Pella-legna Vineyard

Nov 11 – Dawn Stover, SFA Gardens “Designed Plant Communities -Planting for Pollinators in a Pest Wild World”

## First Tuesday in the Garden

The noontime lectures in the IDEA Garden will resume this fall with the following schedule:

**Sept. 5** - "Fall Vegetable Gardening" with Greg Grant

**Oct 3** - "From Bulbs to Blooms" a preview of the October 14 sale event

**Nov. 7** - "All About Trees" with Henry Burch



Jean Smith recently attended the Tyler ISD Student and Staff Recognition night for Greg Grant. Greg has been working with Emily Keane (3rd grade teacher) on her T.A.R.G.E.T program this school year. To read about the program, go to page 2 of this newsletter.

Pictured here are Jean Smith, Emily Keane and Ryan Button (T.J.C. Greene Committee).