



**SOMERVELL  
COUNTY  
MASTER  
GARDENERS  
ASSOCIATION**

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*SCMGA Newsletter*

# *THE GREEN PIECE*



Volume 5, Issue 8

August 2012

## *Let's Grow Tomatoes!*

### *SCMGA Community Horticulture Education Program*

*Monday, August 13, 2012, 6:30 PM*

*Somervell County Citizen Center, 209 SW Barnard*

*Free and Open to the Public*



Come join the Somervell County Master Gardeners, Monday, August 13th at 6:30 p.m. at the Citizens Center and listen to Tom Kimbrow explain how

he grows a bumper crop of tomatoes and more. Mr. Kimbrow owns an insurance agency in Cleburne but in his spare time loves to garden. He uses the Mittleider Method, a simple, highly productive method based on the

premise that if we can grow produce fast, keep the growing environment clean, the plants properly pruned and grown in a manner for maximum light and air circulation you can produce and harvest a large crop fast before disease and pests have a chance to overtake the garden. Come have some fun and learn all about this interesting method for growing tomatoes.



## *The Green Piece Celebrates 4 Year Anniversary!*

*By Donna Hagar, Somervell County Master Gardener*

In July of 2008, the SCMGA decided to create a monthly e-newsletter as a means of keeping our small group informed of activities and for sharing gardening information. Within a short time, we decided to offer it to the local community and distribution quickly grew. In August 2009, on the newsletter's one year anniversary, Sandi Stringer reported a readership of 140. Today, with the use of the Vertical Response distribution system, we now have over 330 in our distribution list. The newsletter has continued to receive accolades at the state Master Gardener level, receiving a First Place Award at this years' 2012 TMGA Conference in May. If you know of someone who might be interested in receiving our newsletter, our website, [somervellmastergardeners.org](http://somervellmastergardeners.org), has a signup form or it can be accessed at this link <http://txmq.org/somervell/newsletters/>.

## More on Fall Gardening

By *Bonnah Boyd, Somervell County Master Gardener*

In last month's newsletter, an article, "July Tips" by Bob Lancaster, stated many varieties of vegetables can be planted in mid-to late summer for fall harvest. The fall season is a great time for gardening and also for improving your landscape.

Fall is definitely a flower season. Many annuals, such as marigolds, show their best bloom in the cooler days. Some spring-flowering flowers, as poppies and larkspur, need to be seeded outdoors now to allow time for them to germinate and grow. Sweet peas perform better if planted in the fall.



Wildflowers should be seeded in the fall season. Mow a potential wildflower area short and rake to scratch the soil surface. Then scatter wildflower seeds over the area, gently pat down and water them in.

Many types of bulbs, such as daffodil/narcissus, oxblood lily, rain lily, spider lily (Hymenocallis), crinum, Amaryllis johnsonii, and several types of lycoris are planted in the fall.

A number of plants wait until fall to bloom. These include Mexican mint marigold, Mexican

bush sage (Salvia leucantha), fall aster, mountain sage (S. regal) and chrysanthemums.

Many roses put out their second bloom in the fall. It is a superior time for planting container grown rose bushes. For best results, relocate rose bushes and other woody ornamentals during October and November.

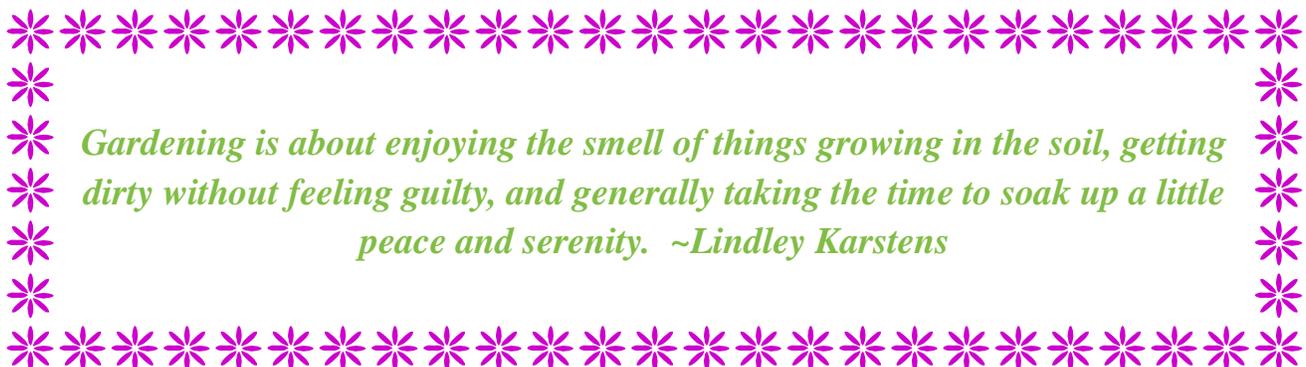


The fall season is a great time to establish herbs either in the garden or in containers or in the flowerbeds. You can use basil, cilantro, oregano and garlic chives. If you want evergreen plants, try upright rosemary and bay shrubs.

Fall is the best season for planting shrubs, trees and woody vines. The roots will grow throughout the fall and winter season, as long as the soil temperatures are 50 degrees or above. The plants will be better prepared to survive the first critical summer season, if planted in the fall.

Take advantage of this coming fall to enjoy and improve your garden and your landscape.

Source: Texas Gardener, July/August 2010 Vol. XXIX No. 5



*Gardening is about enjoying the smell of things growing in the soil, getting dirty without feeling guilty, and generally taking the time to soak up a little peace and serenity. ~Lindley Karstens*

## *August Tips - Growing Perennials*

*by Bob Lancaster, Somervell County Master Gardener*

Perennials are plants that return to your garden year after year from the same root part. Most die down sometime during the year, but many return from bulbs, rhizomes, or fleshy roots. Growing requirements for perennials are similar to annuals, except for the concept of division.



Many perennials become crowded after a year or more and benefit from being dug up, divided into single offshoots or plants and replanted in newly prepared soil. Division not only stimulates perennials, it propagates them as well. It is also a great way to give your neighbor or friend a "quick start" of your favorite plant.

There is no set period of time to wait before dividing your perennials. If they are not blooming well or look crowded it is probably time to divide. An easy and effective rule for when to divide is to divide perennials in the season opposite when they bloom. Divide spring blooming plants in the fall, and fall-bloomers in the spring. Summer flowering perennials are best divided in the late winter or early spring.



A comprehensive discussion of perennials can be found in William C. Welch's book, "Perennial Garden Color".

## *Wade's WallyWorm Word - "Spagyric"*

*Submitted by Wade Moore, Somervell County Master Gardener*

"Wade, would you please----- starts WallyWorm

"Hold on , it's so hot the corn is popping on the stalk and I can't hear you. What was that again?" as Wade nears

" Would you please bring me some salt, pepper, sour cream, and some chives. It has been so hot your potatoes have baked in the ground and I hate to waste them." replies Wallyworm

"If I can get back here with your request without the grasshoppers eating the sour cream and chives, I'll be lucky." says Wade

"Isn't there something you can do to control the grasshoppers without endangering my life too?" asks WallyWorm

"Well, I have read about a SPAGYRIC-type remedy used by some biodynamic gardeners. They use a homeopathic remedy using calcination (burning) in the process." says Wade

"Tell me more. I've had about all of these chorthippus biguttulus bugs as I can stand." urges Wallyworm

"Here is how it goes. Capture no less than 50 of the grasshoppers, or other insect pests, if desired, and burn them to a fine ash. Then, add

this ash to a cup of pure water. Shake that up and then add it to 9 more cups of pure water. This gives you a 2X strength mix. Take one cup of the 2X mix and add it to 9 cups of pure water to obtain a 3X mixture. Follow this process until you reach an 8X strength mix. Use the 8X mix full strength in a sprayer or add it to your irrigation water. A dilute amount will be effective. Keep the remaining 2X mixture for future needs." continues Wade



"The use of SPAGYRIC tinctures from nettle, yarrow, chamomile, and dandelion plants, as well as oak bark, along with BD500 and BD501 to enhance the health and disease resistance for their plants is also practiced by biodynamic gardeners." concludes Wade

This data was fermented, distilled, and extracted from the "The Alchemy Garden" article by Bradley Capron in the May 2012 issue of AcresUSA

## *Favorite Plants of Master Gardeners*

### *Lamb's Ear*

*By Joan Orr, Somervell County Master Gardener*

**Common Name/Scientific Name:** Lamb's Ear/*Stachys byzantina*

**Native/ Adapted:** Well adapted to this area

**Height:** 6-12 inches

**Spread:** Leafy mat

**Light:** Full sun to partial shade/the more sun the stronger the plant

**Evergreen/Deciduous:** Deciduous, cold hardy in the South

**Seasonal Interest:** Flowers in early summer

**Color/ Features:** Silvery gray foliage with purple/pink spikes

**Water:** Low to medium / keep water off leaves to prevent leaf rot

**Maintenance:** Prune plants in late winter

**Wildlife:** No pest or wildlife problems

**Deer Resistant:** Yes

**Comments/Experience with the plant:**

The leaves of this plant resemble a lamb's ear. Lamb's Ear is a deceiving name for this most aggressive and hardy plant. Its growing habits are not gentle as a lamb and in order to keep it under control, one must keep it thinned and trimmed. But its other attributes are definitely worth the effort. The beauty of this plant is its ability to survive with little water, which makes it a very desirable plant for water wise landscaping. It is versatile in that it makes a fine border plant. Because of its silvery gray color, Lamb's Ear is a great contrast against vivid color throughout the garden. Keep a watchful eye wherever you plant Lamb's Ear. It can surprise you and multiply in "a shake of a lamb's tail". Lamb's Ear is a fun thing for everyone to touch because the leaves are soft as lamb's ears. So soft, that as the story goes, our ancestors utilized the leaves long before Charmin came along. Today, we find it as a reliable beautiful and versatile garden choice. Lamb's Ear has been given the designation of being an honorary herb



By Joan Orr Somervell County Master Gardener





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We're on the web!

<http://www.somervellmastergardeners.org>

The Somervell County Master Gardeners are volunteers who work with the AgriLIFE Extension to improve gardening skills throughout the community. Program objectives are implemented through the training of local volunteers known as Master Gardeners. We collaborate with Extension to conduct youth and community education; establish and maintain demonstration gardens; and provide a speakers bureau. We work with special audiences in the community for youth and community outreach of a horticultural nature. We recruit and educate new Master Gardener candidates for effective volunteering.

The training for Somervell County is held in combination with Hood and Johnson Counties and is currently held only every other odd year. The next training for our area will be held in the spring of 2013. If you are interested in the SCMGA, we would like to invite and encourage you to visit one of our monthly meetings, so that you might learn more about our various projects and activities. Our regular monthly business meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Somervell County Extension Office. For more information, please contact Somervell County Extension office at 254-897-2809 or you may email the SCMGA at [somervellmg@gmail.com](mailto:somervellmg@gmail.com).



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