

Williamson County Master Gardener

Journal

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Dedicated to growing with Williamson County

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The President's Corner

Winola Van Artsdalen

July began with two highly successful activities: the four-day children's gardening camp in Hutto and the two-and-a-half day teachers' training at the AgriLife Extension Office. What busy, but rewarding experiences! Juanita James, Brigid Mejia and all involved can give themselves a huge pat on the back!



The following week the excitement reached JoAnne Dieterich, class facilitator and myself. We had been told earlier that the training room would not be available for our Master Gardener Training Class beginning August 10, as scheduled, but there was another room in Round Rock we expected to use. On Monday we learned, just two weeks before the classes were to begin, that we could not use that room, either. With the scarcity and expense of rooms in this area, we were in crisis!

Fortunately, the Sun City Community Association and the Horticulture Club came to our rescue. With the Horticulture Club sponsoring us, the Sun City Community Association is allowing us to use rooms in their beautiful new Cowan Creek Amenities Center for free. For the last class, November 16th, they are giving us the Legacy Hills Pavilion, a gorgeous facility, in a wonderful wildlife area by the lake, again for free. To help you appreciate the value of this gift, the Pavilion charge is \$38 per hour for non-residents and \$19 per hour for residents. They are giving it to us for five hours! We are deeply grateful to both the Sun City Community Association and to the Horticulture Club.

Mark your calendars right now for November 16th. This is a HUGE event for us! It is the last class, graduation for the interns of the 2010 Master Gardeners Class. (This is the class that will be at the Legacy Hills Pavilion.) All master gardeners will be invited to a potluck lunch to visit with and encourage the new interns. This is a first for us, and it is expected to be most enjoyable and productive in bringing these new interns into the fold.

The nominating committee for 2011 is busily at work preparing a slate of officers for the November election. Grace Bryce is the chair and members are Clyde Adley, Ingrid Langdon, John Papich, and Rick Robbins. Anyone interested in running for an office may contact Grace Bryce at grace_bryce@tscj.net.

Wayne Rhoden will lead the charge for another excellent community activity the first week of August, building a raised garden bed for the front of the Georgetown High School. Workers will meet at his house to build the box, then transport it to the high school to be put together where a gang of Master Gardener dirt diggers will wait to fill it. Stick with us, Folks! Life just gets more and more exciting every day!

Gardening Tips from Marlyn Hooper

These long, hot days hot summer are especially stressful on plants and us!! Watering continues to be important. There is no way to predict the amount of rainfall that will occur. It could be very dry, or we could see several days of rain. Do not be fooled by quick thundershowers. Unless at least $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of rain falls, it should not be considered a “good rain”. Water appropriately for our hot Georgetown weather.

Since it may be too hot to enjoy working in the garden, even in the early morning or late afternoon, get out those spring bulb catalogs. Now is the time to start looking through them for what you want to plant next season. Just looking at those pictures of tulip fields and beds of daffodils can almost convince you that it's not 95 or 100+ degrees outside.

This is one of those times when your Texas gardening journal entries, pictures, and videos you made last spring will be useful. You do this, don't you??? Review what worked and what didn't. Don't get stuck in a rut, doing exactly the same thing every year. But on the other hand, if it ain't broke, don't fix it!

After the last broods of the season have left the nests, clean out all of your birdhouses, removing old nests. Prepare your bird feeders for the migration season. Clean them using a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water. Rinse well. Be a good host or hostess.

Don't forget: order three or four types of paper white narcissus to force at two-week intervals. You will have flowers from Halloween into the New Year. Your house will look like Spring!!

Jack in the Bean Stalk

Patty Hoenigman

It was late April when I purchased a packet of seeds.” Let’s have a little color in the garden along with my vegetables”, I thought. So the packet with four varieties of flowers came home with me. After laying out my square foot gardens, intermingling zinnias and marigolds with the chard and peppers, one of the pictures on that packet of seeds kept talking to me. My husband had just built an arbor with some large raised beds on either side. They’ll eventually have Earth Kind Roses in them, but for now they’re wonderful compost bins.

With nothing to lose, I opened the packet of Egyptian Pea Vine seeds, *Dolichos*, to find large black seeds with a white Mohawk along one edge. Curious little things! (Ever notice how unique each seed is?) I had no idea whatsoever about what might grow from these seeds, but there was enough good soil in my bed to make it a nothing ventured nothing gained situation.



flowers and small purple pea pods with edible beans! Easy to see why it's also known as purple hyacinth bean.

Remember my story last year about the lemon cucumber plant that showed up in my garden and grew so vigorously that it began climbing up the brick and into the screens on my windows? Well, this was like that! A ten foot long vine may not be suitable for every spot, but it sure has been fun watching it grow! Unfortunately it won't take the winter frost, so when it dies back it will just fall right down into the compost pile and who knows what will grow there next year!



Those 4 seeds began growing and growing and growing and growing! Pretty soon the long tendrils were swirling in the wind, catching on to each other, spinning around the lattice of the arbor, climbing higher and higher. Stand back... this thing's taking over!!! I half expected to see Jack climbing the bean stalk!

Watching things grow from seed is an amazing experience! Within 3 months this vine was producing the most beautiful red-violet clusters of

Photo Opportunities at Berry Springs Park

Claire Hall

On one of my volunteer days at Berry Springs Park and Preserve, I mentioned to Park Ranger Susan Blackledge that all of our children and grandchildren were going to be gathering at our home for a “reunion”. I was hoping to find a good outdoor setting for a family photo.

That's when Susan suggested I think about Berry Springs. The park abounds with great backdrops: the fishing pond, the butterfly garden, and the gorgeous pecan trees. In particular, Susan told me that she had kept in place a tree that had fallen but was still living. What an interesting backdrop that would make!

So after a reconnaissance mission, I hired a photographer, the family gathered there and he took approximately 60 shots of the 16 of us in various family groupings. This is our favorite:



You've got to admit. . .the trees are gorgeous!

So if you're looking for a great outdoor location for family photos, I highly recommend Berry Springs Park. Susan told me that they are now booking wedding photos too. She requested that the photographer contact her ahead of time to schedule the photo shoot, as there are often several events occurring on the same day. That way, the location can be kept available. Susan also mentioned that photographers using the park are required to pay 10% of their fee back to the park.

For more information, contact Susan at 512-930-0400. If you'd like the name of a good photographer, contact me at claireandterryhall@gmail.com.

The Seed Man

Patty Hoenigman

There was a man I knew in San Diego who had a store in his house where he sold seeds. His name was Mr. Ledgerwood. Everyone in San Diego went to him to buy their seeds and garden amendments. We all knew that we weren't going there only to watch him measure out a half ounce of seeds on his brass scale but to take home a little part of Mr. Ledgerwood's wisdom about gardening that he so freely shared. We got a dime's worth of seeds and a dollar's worth of wisdom with every purchase. He died at the age of 90, and this is the poem I read at his memorial

The Seed Packet author unknown

***I paid a dime for a package of seeds,
And the clerk tossed them out with a flip.
"We have them assorted to every man's needs,"
He said with a smile on his lip.
"Asters and poppies and pansies and peas,
Ten cents a package and pick as you please."***

***Now, seeds are just dimes to the man in the store,
And the dimes are the things that he needs;
And I've been to buy them in seasons before,
But have thought of them merely as seeds.
But it flashed through my mind, as I took them this time
You have purchased a miracle here for a dime!***

***You've a dime's worth of something no man can create,
You've a dime's worth of life in your hand.
You've a dime's worth of mystery, destiny, fate,
That the wisest cannot understand.
In this bright little package, now isn't it odd,
You've a dime's worth of something known only to God.***

Bugs in the Garden

Rhinoceros in Round Rock?

Claire Hall

Rhinoceros Beetle, that is. This lovely specimen was found by my grandchildren on their Round Rock driveway. None of us knew what it was so we decided to do some Internet research.

First of all, this beetle is harmless in spite of its appearance. Only the males have horns, one on top of the head and the other below, projecting from the middle of the thorax. The females are quite plain by comparison and are less often seen. The rhino is part of the scarab family of beetles.

The beetles live in compost piles where they help break down the material. They are nocturnal feeders and can be attracted to lights in the darkness. They are considered quite beneficial. In this area, armadillos and opossums feed on the larvae of rhino beetles.

The fascinating thing about rhinoceros beetles is that they are prized in Asia and can be quite expensive, costing thousands of dollars. Many children in Japan keep them as pets. Additionally, they are perhaps among the strongest animals in the world. One internet cite claimed a rhino beetle could lift as much as 850 times its own body weight. The *Texas Bug Book* states it can lift a mere 100 times its body weight. At either rate, that's quite strong. If you want some entertainment, there is a online video of a Rhinoceros Beetle slugging it out with a tarantula. It's a bit gruesome and a real crowd pleaser among 4-6 year old male children.

So if you find a rhino beetle in the garden consider yourself lucky. It's a real workhorse and will do no harm to your plantings.



Avery Garden Rancheros Learn About Oak Wilt

Patty Hoenigman

Before we left California to move to Texas I googled 'Garden Clubs' and couldn't find anything in my new neighborhood. Then after we got here I started asking ladies who were buying plants at nurseries if they knew of any garden clubs and they'd tell me there had been some over the years but they'd come and gone, except for the ones in Georgetown and that meet down at Zilker Park. So the idea for me to start a garden club in Avery Ranch began five years ago. It took a while for this club to get up and going, but now, three years into it, the Avery Garden Rancheros, has nearly 70 members! I set it up so that we'd be focusing on having a speaker or going to an interesting nursery, rather than reading minutes and bothering with Robert's Rules of Order. We don't have any dues either...we just have fun!

In July, JoAnne Dieterich came to give a presentation on Oak Wilt to our group of eager listeners. All of us were concerned about the fate of our trees. Oak Wilt hasn't hit Avery Ranch yet, but we know it's all around us and it won't be long. It sure has caused a flurry of concern as people hear others talking about this dreadful fungus that can kill their grand old oak trees. We all had a good time at the potluck afterwards, but I hope the message went home with everyone to watch for signs of browning canopies, paint fresh cuts within ten minutes, and don't prune from January til June.

If you'd like to start a garden club in your neighborhood, feel free to contact me. Thanks to computers, it's been easy to manage by just emailing everyone the invitation each month. We always meet at somebody's home. It's been a great way to meet neighbors who are interested in gardening and share what we know!



Members of the Avery Garden Rancheros learn from JoAnne Dieterich about Oak Wilt disease.

Monthly Meetings

Williamson County Master Gardeners hold monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month at 6:30pm. This month's meeting will be held at the Georgetown Public Library. Master Gardeners and the public are welcome to attend.

Newsletter Submissions

Thank you to those Master Gardeners who submitted articles, pictures, and ideas for this newsletter issue. If you would like to contribute to the *Williamson County Master Gardener Journal*, please send your submissions to Jane Williamson at jawilliamson516@yahoo.com by the 25th of the month. As you garden, volunteer and learn, take a moment to share with other gardeners.

Williamson County Master Gardener Officers for 2010

Officers:

Winola Van Artdalen, President	jimwin@verizon.net	(512) 863-4923
Ed Myatt, Vice-president	emyatt@dexcopolymers.com	(512) 869-4293
Jeanne Barker, Secretary	jubarker@yahoo.com	(512) 608-1296
Sandra Lawrence, Treasurer	swlawrence@austin.rr.com	(512) 351-9678
Wayne Rhoden, Immediate Past President	mgardener@suddenlink	(512) 869-8016

Standing Committees/Chairpersons:

Programs/Education	Paul Lawrence	pwlawrence@austin.rr.com	(512) 351-9678
Communications	Clyde Adley	cadley+mg@gmail.com	(512) 918-8024
Membership/Volunteer	John Papich	texasjayp@hotmail.com	(512) 863-4098
Awards	Norma Beissner	norma@beissner.org	(512) 535-6584
Class Training/ Facilitation	JoAnne Dieterich	crdieterich@yahoo.com	(512) 778-6690
JMG Coordinator	Juanita James	jjames20@sbcglobal.net	(512) 341-7116
Fund Raising	Linda Zazula	lszazula@gmail.com	(512) 240-5139
Greenhouse Manager	Brenda McIndoo	airedale98@gmail.com	(512) 868-9212

