

BIRTHDAYS:

Volume 5, Issue 9October, 2019

October

Anna Baker, 10/9
Lou Ellen Bliss, 10/10
Joan Driver, 10/11
Sharon Palmer, 10/21

November

John Clark, 11/3
Karen Gonzalez, 11/04
Martha Mitchell, 11/12
Mimi Sherwin, 11/15
Tommy Phillips, 11/17
Kathy Brasuell, 11/17
April Trekell 11/24
Donna Burcham, 11/25
Carter Hallmark, 11/29
Sally Mitchell, 11/30
Bob Williams, 11/30

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Newsletter Staff Needs Your Help!

If you like to write, or even if you don't, but have good ideas for articles and/or subjects for the newsletter please consider joining the newsletter staff.
Contact Sandra Rosen or Paula Marshall for more information.

We welcome all of our Master Gardeners to forward articles or information for our newsletter to our Editor:
sandrarosen42@yahoo.com

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Sandra Rosen	Joan Driver
Paula Marshall	Anna Baker
Don Taylor	Jan Graham
John Womack	

FSMG Fall Seminar Review

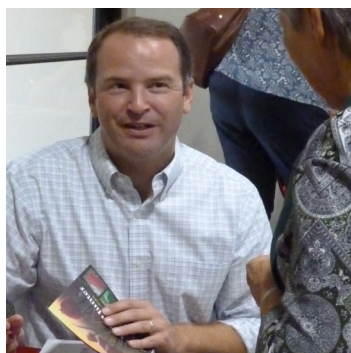
Tuesday evening, September 24th, was a fun evening for all who attended the FSMG Association's Fall seminar, featuring Chris Wiesinger (aka The Bulb Hunter) and Todd Williams, Rockwall County Extension Agent.

Chris spoke about the many humorous and heartwarming experiences he has had since a college student collecting heirloom flower bulbs from old home sites, cemeteries, barnyards, ditches and other unusual sites, and gave some good information on which bulbs do well in our area. He also brought many bulbs and to sell and autographed his book, *The Bulb Hunter*, for those who asked.

Todd and his helper, Carol, who is a Master Gardener in Rockwall County, demonstrated ways to put together beautiful floral arrangements using materials that most people have in their yards or pastures - much of which we see every day and consider weeds - but, when used in a floral arrangement, they turn into beautiful accents that can look airy and even exotic when used with other florals.

More than 50 people were in attendance to listen to the speakers, eat wonderful food provided by our FSMG's, and bid on a great variety of silent auction items.

Thanks to everyone who helped to plan this event, fixed food, decorated the tables, solicited silent auctions, helped with setup and take down, and everything else that is involved in putting on an event of this nature. It was a great success and we should all be very proud of how the evening turned out!



President's Message

By Paula Marshall

Fall brings cooler temperatures, shorter days and hopefully, a chance to catch our breath before the holidays begin. It's also time to enjoy a fall vegetable garden. If you were inclined to plant green beans, cucumbers, peas, etc. during the hot humid days of August and September.

If not, it's still not too late to plant turnip, lettuce, radish, and spinach seed, as well as transplants of the cold weather crops. I have a question though How is it that the minute I set out a broccoli, collards, or kale plant, a sneaky little moth (that I never do see) comes to visit, lays an egg and within a few days, a fat green worm has devoured the leaves of my healthy \$3.29 plant, and all that is left is a skinny dried up stalk? Where does that little moth hide all summer long while waiting for me to be its "hostess" so that it can become a "mother"? It's a mystery, but I will never stop trying.

I just want to say how proud I am of how our seminar turned out last week! The decorations were beautiful, the atmosphere was warm and friendly, the food was delicious, the speakers were great, the silent auction was extremely popular and profitable, and the crowd seemed to enjoy every minute of it. Thanks to all of you who helped in any way ... it takes a lot of work to do a program like this for the public and I am so grateful for what you all contributed.

Also, in case you don't read the emails I send you (?), our trip to Seville Farms that was to be our October meeting has been canceled because of their inability to accommodate us in a way that would make the trip worthwhile. Therefore, we will have our monthly meeting as usual on October 10th at the library. See you then!

Garden Guru



Dear Garden Guru - What is the one thing that gardeners can do to simplify their gardening? There are enrichments, pesticides, insecticides, pH, and on and on. What is the best? What works?

And the answer is simple - compost the soil and spray compost tea on the leaves of your plants. This not only enriches the soil, but also is an organic control for a variety of pests. The sprays not only act as natural fungicides against leaf blight and powdery mildew, but most importantly, assist in providing you with healthy plants. Spraying the leaves provides quick nourishment to the plants. Healthy plants reduce invasion of pests and disease infected plants.

John Womack, MG



Tyler Rose Garden Center
420 Rose Park Drive,
Tyler, Texas 75702

The East Texas Fruit, Nut, and Vegetable Conference

Friday, October 11, 2019

Topics to Include:

- Pesticide Rules & Regulations Update
- Blueberries
- A Lifetime of Growing Vegetables
- Commercial
 - Kiwi Fruit: Opportunity or Headache
 - Wine Grapes in East Texas
- Homeowner
 - Growing Fruit & Nut Trees in East Texas
 - Pecan Production
 - Composting

Registration @ 8AM | Program @ 8:30AM

\$30 per person payable at the door

Lunch Provided! Vendors on Site!

5 TDA CEU Hours Pending TDA Approval

Please have your pesticide license with you to ensure proper CEU credit.

RSVP to the Smith County
Extension Office at (903) 590-2980



In compliance with ADA requirements, participants with special needs can be reasonably accommodated by contacting the Smith County Extension Office at least ten working days prior to the event.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.



Our Thyme Farm



12 oz. Honey Bears \$6.00

Half/Pint Jams & Jellies
\$4.00

Soap \$4.00 ea. or 3/\$10.00

Call or Text 330-801-3180
Or Message on Facebook
Nancy Szabo

October Gardening Chores

Tommy Phillips

County Extension Agent, Ag/NR

October and autumn days represent a new gardening season and timely gardening chores to be accomplished. Do not allow the short, delightful days of autumn to pass without reviewing the many possible gardening activities.

1. Think spring in October - plant spring bulbs. During October and November is spring bulb planting time - daffodils, narcissi, hyacinth, crocus and Dutch iris. Choose healthy, sound bulbs from a reliable source. Prepare soils in a sunny well drained location.
2. Selection and Preparation of Tulip beds - Tulips should be selected now to be stored in refrigeration for 45-60 days prior to planting in December and early January. Do not freeze the bulbs or remove from refrigeration until time for planting.
3. Winter-Green Lawn - Sow Rye Grass - Sow annual rye grass and perennial turf type rye grass seed in mid to late October at the rate of 5 lbs / 1000 sq ft. Make an even distribution of seed for a uniform color and stand of winter grass. Mow and rake existing lawn prior to overseeding.
4. Establish a compost pile - establish a compost pile to accommodate falling leaves and to prepare soils for spring planting.
5. Order Fruit catalogs- order fruit catalogs and make variety selections for winter (January -February) planting.
6. Vegetable transplants for fall - Vegetables that can be transplanted or seeded in early October include beets, Brussels sprouts (plants), Swiss chard, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, radish, spinach and turnips.
7. Lawn care - St. Augustine, Bermuda and centipede lawns should be fertilized no later than the first week of October if you have not already made your fall application. Use a 3-1-2 or similar ratio. Lawns are not growing quite so fast now, but keep up with the mowing. Continue mowing at the same height, and do not remove more than 1/3 of the length of the grass blades to prevent stress. If St. Augustine or Bermuda grass does not seem to be growing well, it could be the pH is too low. Fall is a good time to add lime if the soil is acidic. Get a soil test done to determine the soil pH and add lime if pH is below 5.7. Centipede lawns usually do not need liming since centipede tolerates moderately acidic soils. Perennial and annual rye grass can be sown not to cover bare soils to protect from erosion.
8. Prepare household plants for over wintering - The cooler days of October are an ideal time for good houseplant growth and development. It too, is a good time to groom and prepare the plants for bringing into protected areas for winter. Repot overgrown houseplants to reduce compaction of growth. Bring plants back indoors prior to turning on the heat in your home to allow for adaptability to a new location.

Watch Out for These Bugs!

By Sandra Rosen

If you are planting a fall garden, here are some pests to watch out for and the plants that they especially like.

Beans – Mexican bean beetles, corn earworms, and mites

Broccoli – cutworms, cabbage worms and loopers, and aphids

Brussel sprouts – flea beetles, cabbage worms and loopers, cutworms, and aphids

Cauliflower – aphids, cutworms, cabbage worms and loopers

Cabbage – flea beetles, cabbage worms and loopers, and aphids

Lettuce – aphids on leaves and also around base of plants

Onions – thrips and onion root maggots

Potatoes – Colorado potato beetles, flea beetles, leafhoppers

As you plant your winter veggies, plan to pull these plants out by Valentine's Day 2020. Keeping beds clean and mulched makes for a healthier garden.

What is the Difference? Heirloom vs. Hybrid

By Sandra Rosen

There's a lot of confusion out there regarding hybrid vs heirloom plants. What's the difference?

A hybrid vegetable is created when plant breeders intentionally cross-pollinate two different varieties of a plant, aiming to produce an offspring, or hybrid, that contains the best traits of each of the parents. Cross-pollination can also be a natural process that occurs within members of the same plant species.

In hybridization, pollination is carefully controlled to ensure that the right plants are crossed to achieve the desired combination of characteristics, such as bigger size or better disease resistance. The process of developing a hybrid typically requires many years.

In general, hybrids offer some combination of these favorable traits: dependability, less required care, early maturity, higher yield, improved flavor, specific plant size, and/or better disease resistance. Hybrid vegetables typically look like the veggies you'd find at a supermarket.

How experts define heirlooms can vary, but typically they are at least 50 years old, and are often pre-WWII varieties. Most heirlooms come from seed that has been

handed down for generations in a particular region or area, hand-selected by gardeners for a special trait. Others may have been developed by a university a long time ago (again at least 50 years), in the early days of commercial breeding. All heirloom vegetables are open-pollinated, which means they're pollinated by insects or wind without human intervention. In addition, they tend to remain stable in their characteristics from one year to the next.

Many gardeners agree that most heirloom varieties boast greater flavor than that found in hybrids, especially among tomatoes.

While hybrid plants typically yield a crop that is uniform in both appearance and timing, heirloom vegetables may produce a "mixed bag" harvest. The harvest come in less predictably, and fruit size can vary greatly even on the same plant.

Despite their sometimes odd looks and quirky ways, heirlooms bring lots to the table! The Amish heirloom tomato Pink Brandywine, for example, yields fruit with an unbeatable flavor in shades reminiscent of a glass of Cabernet. Arkansas Traveler, a Southern favorite, originated in Northwest Arkansas prior to 1900 and gradually found its way across the South to North Carolina. Offering

some resistance to cracking and disease, this beauty yields delicious tomatoes under typical Southern summer conditions – high heat, high humidity, and drought.

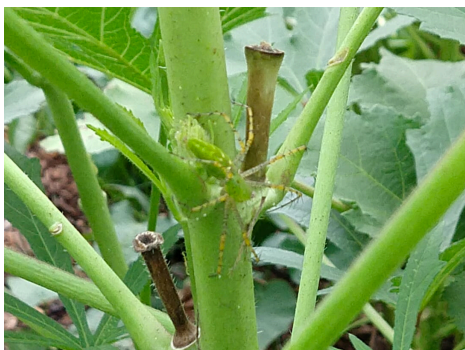
Which is best? Totally up to your individual taste. Heirlooms bring quality to the table, but hybrids usually are best for quantity. (information from bonnieplants.com)

Now what are GMOS? A hybrid plant is NOT a GMO. A hybrid has NOT been genetically altered. GMOS are any plant, animal, or microorganism that has been genetically altered using molecular genetic techniques such as gene cloning and protein engineering. Plants like corn can have the pesticide Bt engineered into its genetic makeup to make it resistant to certain pests and thus is a GMO plant. Bt is a natural pesticide, but it would never naturally find its way into corn seed. GMOS have a terrible reputation – who would want to eat a food not knowing what had been engineered into the seed? However, there have been times when GMOs have had a quite positive impact – such as the high-yield, disease resistant dwarf wheat introduced by Norman Ernest Borlaug, which helped increase the food supplies in India and Pakistan.

DID YOU KNOW?

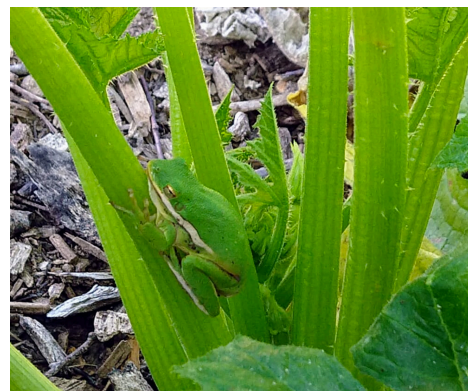
By Becky Hettinger

- ✧ Honey Bees must gather nectar from two million flowers to make one pound of honey.
- ✧ One Bee has to fly about 90,000 miles (three times around the globe) to make one pound of honey.
- ✧ The average Bee will make only 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey in it's lifetime.
- ✧ A Honeybee can fly up to six miles and as fast as fifteen mph.
- ✧ A colony of bees consist of 20,000-60,000 Honeybees and one Queen.
- ✧ Worker Bees are all female, they live about six weeks and do all the work.
- ✧ Honeybees have been producing honey in the same way for 150 million years.
- ✧ The Honey bee is the only insect that produces food eaten by man.



Beneficial Life at the Community Garden

Photographs by Sharon Palmer



Gardening Events – October, 2018

Oct. 1 - Smith County - First Tuesday in the Garden This popular series continues at noon in the IDEA Garden with "Summer Bulbs" (which will be featured in the SCMG From Bulbs to Blooms event) with Anne Pattullo and Tommie Grinnell, Smith County Master Gardeners. This event is free with limited seating so bring your own chair for your comfort.

Oct. 5 - Pineywoods Native Plant Center, located at 2900 Raquet St in historic Nacogdoches. The sale will feature more than 300 varieties of hard-to-find, "Texas-tough" plants, including natives, edibles, heirlooms, perennials, shrubs and trees, with an emphasis on pollinator friendly selections, as well as exclusive SFA introductions. The featured plants are extensively trialed before being offered to the public and are produced by SFA Gardens staff members and volunteers. For more information and a list of available plants, call (936) 468-4404, or visit sfagardens.sfasu.edu two weeks before the sale. For list of available plants, go to Plant List (Excel file). To view the list of bulbs available (as of September 24th), go to 2019 Bulb list. Revisit this site for updates from time to time.

Oct. 5 - Vintage Garden Market, hosted by Kaufman Co. MG 9am-6pm Kaufman Co. Poor Farm Museum.

Oct. 10-Free State MG Meeting - Library 9:00am

Oct. 11-East Texas Fruit, Nut and Vegetable Conference

Oct. 12 - ET Daylily, Iris societies Fall Bulb and Plant Sale. Location: vacate lot at 2700 SW Loop 323 from 9am- sold out.

Oct. 12 -From Bulbs to Blooms Fall Conference and Sale Harvey Hall, 2000 W. Front St., Tyler - Free & Open to the Public. Registration at 8:30am, Conference starts at 9:00am

Tyler State Park

Oct 5 - 2:00pm Wildflowers, Pollinators, and Predators
Texas Pollinator Bioblitz!

Oct 12 - 8:15am, Tyler State Park Birding Tour, Let's Go Birding!

Oct 12 - 10:30am, Birding 101: Introduction to Birding, Everybody's a birder!

Oct 12 - 2:00pm Wildflowers, Pollinators, and Predators
Texas Pollinator Bioblitz!

Oct. 17 - Van Zandt Co. Library Series, Bees, 10 AM, Speaker Beth Derr Mg and Master Beekeeper will speak at the library 317 First Monday Lane, Canton, TX.

Oct. 15 - Henderson MG Library Series, on Tuesday at 5:30pm at the Clint W. Murchison Memorial Library, 121 S. Praireville, Athens, will present, Brenda Swagerty, manager and grower for Plants of Texas, a family owned nursery located in Lindale, TX, will speak on the topic of roses. This presentation is free and open to the public.

Oct. 18 & 19 - Southern Garden Symposium at St. Fran-

cisville, Louisiana. For full schedule and other details, go to <http://www.southerngardensymposium.org/>

Oct. 17-20 86th Annual Texas Rose Festival - Tyler, Free Rose Queens Tea in Rose Garden, Saturday, 19th 1-3:00pm., Parade, Art Fair in Bergfield Park, etc.
Schedule of events: <https://www.texasrosefestival.com/>

Oct. 26 - Henderson Co, Mg will host Tomato Town and all day event at Athens Country Club, 500 Park Drive, Athens. 8:00am-3:30pm. Tickets are \$75 and may be purchased at <https://hendersonmgejoinme.org/tomatotown> or by calling 903-675-6130. The program includes four experts who will explain all you need to know to grow fat, juicy, flavorful tomatoes. Breakfast and lunch are also included in the \$75 ticket price. Email questions to tomatotown2019@gmail.com.

Nov. 2 - The Official Opening of the Longview Arboretum, Free & Open to the Public, donations appreciated. 706 W. Cotton St. (44.14 mi) Longview, Texas 75608, (903) 237-1398

Advanced Training Offerings in 2019

This information is from the TXMG Web site\

Greenhouse Management – October 17-19, hosted by Tarrant County, in Ft. Worth



Sharon Palmer, Master Gardener

By Joan Driver



After Sharon Palmer, husband Todd, and two daughters moved to Ben Wheeler several years ago, the couple individually spotted a newspaper ad seeking new trainees for the Van Zandt County Master Gardeners group. Todd actually was the one, knowing Sharon's interests, who encouraged her to apply. "Being part of Master Gardeners," she says now, "has really helped me to plug in to the area and become an active member in the county."

Sharon's interests in working the soil developed from watching her father garden and listening to him reminisce about his own childhood, gardening and living the country life. Her first job, at 14, was a 12-year stint with his lawn care business, which she calls "the most satisfying job I ever had."

Her enthusiasm for vegetable gardening is evident in her leadership in the community garden project.

"There's just something about being able to eat what you've grown that appeals to me," she explained.

"Watching the plant go from seed to tasty edibles is fascinating and beautiful." She also acknowledges that providing an aesthetic experience for observers is a motivating factor as well as providing fresh vegetables for others who could not afford them. She also enjoys the social aspects of the Master Gardener experience. "Swapping gardening stories is a great way to learn, or an opportunity to laugh, and I very much love to laugh."

Sharon's favorite gardening techniques are the old fashioned ones of soil amendment and mulching, which she calls basic ideas that have more than basic results. She claims that she has a knack for close planting of vegetables that cause unintended cross-pollination. "The effects can be pleasing to the eye," she ruefully reports. "I'm just not so sure about it being pleasing to the tongue." Nonetheless, she advises others not to become discouraged if results are not always those intended, but to be willing to research and ask for help. Be willing to experiment and learn.

In addition to gardening, Sharon loves to read, preferring classics and especially British literature. She is a particular fan of anything related to the epic series *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien.

Ratatouille's Ratatouille

As envisioned by Smitten Kitchen

- 1/2 onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, very thinly sliced
- 1 cup tomato puree (such as Pomi)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 small eggplant (my store sells these "Italian Eggplant" that are less than half the size of regular ones; it worked perfectly)
- 1 smallish zucchini
- 1 smallish yellow squash
- 1 longish red bell pepper
- Few sprigs fresh thyme
- Salt and pepper
- Few tablespoons soft goat cheese, for serving

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

Pour tomato puree into bottom of an oval baking dish, approximately 10 inches across the long way. Drop the sliced garlic cloves and chopped onion into the sauce, stir in one tablespoon of the olive oil and season the sauce generously with salt and pepper.

Trim the ends off the eggplant, zucchini and yellow squash. As carefully as you can, trim the ends off the red pepper and remove the core, leaving the edges intact, like a tube.

On a mandolin, adjustable-blade slicer or with a very sharp knife, cut the eggplant, zucchini, yellow squash and red pepper into very thin slices, approximately 1/16-inch thick.

Atop the tomato sauce, arrange slices of prepared vegetables concentrically from the outer edge to the inside of the baking dish, overlapping so just a smidgen of each flat surface is visible, alternating vegetables. You may have a handful leftover that do not fit.

Drizzle the remaining tablespoon olive oil over the vegetables and season them generously with salt and pepper. Remove the leaves from the thyme sprigs with your fingertips, running them down the stem. Sprinkle the fresh thyme over the dish.

Cover dish with a piece of parchment paper cut to fit inside. (Tricky, I know, but the hardest thing about this.)

Bake for approximately 45 to 55 minutes, until vegetables have released their liquid and are clearly cooked, but with some structure left so they are not totally limp. They should not be brown at the edges, and you should see that the tomato sauce is bubbling up around them.

Serve with a dab of soft goat cheese on top, alone, or with some crusty French bread, atop polenta, couscous, or your choice of grain.