

HOE!  
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HOE!

February 2014

GRIMES COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 10, ISSUE II

IN THIS ISSUE

#### Officers for 2014

President: Jamie Bruns  
Vice President: Cathey Hardeman  
Secretary: Nicky Maddams  
Treasurer: Dianna Westmoreland

#### Committee Chairs

Administration: Nicky Maddams  
Timekeeping: Martha Brogdon  
Awards/Social: Scotty Bennett  
Children's Activities: None  
Communications: Nicky Maddams  
Intern Class: None  
Co-op: Fred Vesperman  
Anderson Beautification: Janeth Nevill  
Publicity: Peggy Sloan  
Fundraising: None  
Awards: Jamie Bruns/Nicky Maddams  
Go Texan Landscaping: Mike Brame  
Demo Gardens: Fred Vesperman  
County Fair Judging: Marti Luedtke  
Historian: Sharon Murry

#### Texas AgriLife Extension

Extension Agent: Kimberly Hall  
MG Coordinator: Jayla Fry  
Secretary: Sandra Cook

#### Newsletter

Editor: Nicky Maddams  
Article submissions, photos and information  
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Email: [grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com)

#### Upcoming Events

February 11 9:00am Monthly Meeting; Tutorial  
of new Volunteer Management System which  
will be utilized to record volunteer hours  
moving forward.

March 11 9:00am Monthly Meeting

May 13 Spring Social at Dianna Westmoreland's

October 14 Fall Social at Dia Copeland's

December 5 Christmas Party and Awards Night



- Tribute to MG
- Anderson Project Update and Photos
- What to do with your Frozen Plants
- Is it Time to Plant?



#### Get to Know Your Fellow Master Gardeners!

Were you missed? Did you not have time to  
complete the interview when requested? Please  
contact Nicky Maddams to be included in future  
issues of the newsletter.

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

**IN MEMORIAM**  
**Master Gardener Edmond McGee**



1935-2014

Dr. Edmond Clark McGee Jr., 78, of Navasota, TX, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Jan. 18, 2014, with his family at his side. Born on Sept 8, 1935, to Edmond Clark McGee Sr. and Georgie McGee, he was their only child that survived to adulthood.

Edmond was raised in Houston, TX but spent many weekends with his grandparents in the Retreat/Navasota area. He was a graduate of Stephen F. Austin High School and later went on to the University of Houston, where he earned his Doctorate in Optometry and practiced in this field for over 45 years. His patients were very devoted to him, even following him across town when his office moved from Sharpstown to Baytown.

Upon retirement, he moved to his family's homestead in Navasota, where he built a new home to replace the family home, which burned down in 2001. Edmond solidified his interest in horticulture by becoming a Texas Master Gardener. Involved in numerous volunteer/community projects, Edmond committed himself to beautifying the local community. He was a committee member for the Anderson Beautification Project, which combined his love of history with his love of plants. Some of the other projects/organizations he was involved with included the garden at Lynn Grove Methodist Church, the garden at Navasota Community Center, the Alley Theatre, and the Whitehall Fairview Cemetery.

Edmond will be forever missed by the Grimes County Master Gardeners.



FEBRUARY brings us the following birthdays:  
 Michael Havens – February 8  
 Ann DeWitt – February 10

**CHECKLIST FOR THE GARDEN**  
**JANUARY/FEBRUARY**

Source: [www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu](http://www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu)

- Now is an excellent time to transplant mature or established trees and shrubs while they are dormant.
- Make flower and vegetable garden plans now before the rush of spring planting. Time spent in armchair gardening before the fireplace will pay off in improved plant selection. Besides, it is fun to page through the garden catalogs.
- Sow seeds in flats or containers to get a jump on plant growth before hot weather arrives. Petunias, begonias, and impatiens should be sown in early January. Warm temperature plants, such as tomatoes, peppers, marigolds, and periwinkles, should be sown indoors in late January or early February.
- Apply a light application of fertilizer to established pansy plantings. Use one-half pound of ammonium sulfate per 100 square feet of bed area. Repeat the application every 4 to 6 weeks, depending on rainfall. Dried blood meal is also an excellent source of fertilizer for pansies.
- Prepare beds and garden area for spring planting.
- Select and order gladiolus corms for February/March planting. Plant at two-week intervals to prolong flowering period.
- Check junipers and other narrow-leaf evergreens for bagworm pouches. The insect eggs overwinter in the pouch, and start the cycle again by emerging in the spring to begin feeding on the foliage. Hand removal and burning of the pouches are ways of reducing the potential damage next spring.
- The life of the plant received as a Christmas gift can be prolonged with proper care. Keep the soil moist, but provide drainage so that excess moisture can flow from the pot. Keep the plant out of range of heating ducts and away from heating units. Keep in a cool room at night, preferably at 60 to 65 degrees F.
- Don't fertilize newly set out trees or shrubs until after they have started to grow, and then only very lightly the first year.
- When buying plants, the biggest is not always the best, especially when dealing with bare-root plants. The medium to small sizes (4 to 6 feet)

are usually faster to become established and more effective in the landscape than the large sizes.

- Hold off on pruning bush roses until February or early March. Use good shears that will make clean cuts. Remove dead, dying, and weak canes. Leave 4 to 8 healthy canes, and remove approximately one-half of the top growth and height of the plant.
- Now is an excellent time to select and plant container-grown roses to fill in those bare spots in your rose garden.
- When pruning shrubs, first prune out any dead or damaged branches; then thin out by removing about one-third of the canes or stems at ground level, removing the oldest canes only; and last, shape the rest of the plant, but do not cut everything back to the same height.
- Water foliage plants as well as other containerized plants only when needed and not by the calendar.
- Climbing roses should be trained but not pruned. Weave long canes through openings in trellises or arbors and tie them with jute twine or plastic/wire plant ties. Securing canes now prevents damage from winter winds, and contributes toward a more refined look to the garden when roses are blooming. Wait until after the spring flowering period to prune climbing or once-blooming shrub roses.

**February Vegetable Planting Guide**

Now - 3/5	Carrots
Now - 3/15	Asparagus
Now - 3/5	Beets
Now - 3/5	Broccoli
Now - 3/15	Garlic
Now - 3/10	Kale
Now - 3/10	Kohlrabi
Now - 3/15	Lettuce (head)
Now - 3/20	Lettuce (leaf)
Now - 4/15	Mustard
Now - 2/20	Spinach
Now - 4/20	Turnips
Now - 2/5	Onions (plants)
Now - 2/20	Peas (English)
Now - 3/5	Peas (Edible Pod)
Now - 5/5	Radishes

## AFTER A FREEZE

After a freeze, some plants may show signs of frost damage. Frost damage can reveal itself as dark areas on leaves, a burnt appearance, or wilting. Here are some things you can do to help protect and nurture a plant with frost/freeze damage.

1. Don't prune: Although frost damage can be unsightly, you should not cut back dead or damaged leaves or branches. This is very difficult for many gardeners, as cutting something unhealthy off their plant feels like the natural thing to do. However, the damaged leaves still have benefit by acting to protect the remaining plant from wind and chill. Besides, pruning promotes tender new growth, which is the last thing we want before winter is over. Keep your shears away until spring (late February for perennials and early March for tropicals) when the weather begins to warm. Spring is the time to cut back dead matter and let new growth take over. Feel free to trim plants all the way to the ground, just leaving a few inches of old growth. After you prune, use a fertilizer. Microlife 6-2-4 is an outstanding organic fertilizer that will help your plants with the production of new leaves and branches.

2. Add Compost/Mulch: It's never a bad time to add compost and mulch. In fact, adding these two during the winter helps to further insulate plants' root-zones while supplying plants with essential nutrients and the microbiology the need to stay healthy and happy. For mulch, native hardwood is best, (double-ground and aged); apply a 2-3 inch layer.

3. Prevent further damage: A damaged plant may not have what it takes to make it through another freeze. Protect these tender plants by bringing them inside if possible. If this isn't possible, wrap them in frost cloth. Cover the entire plant and secure well at the base to ensure no wind can move under the cloth. Wrapping a plant may make the difference between life and death in the garden. Before a hard freeze, water your garden well. Water saturated soil holds heat better than a dry soil. Keep damaged plants well watered but be mindful that plants need less in cooler weather.

Source: *Buchanan's Native Plants Houston*

### INQUIRIES RECEIVED THROUGH EXTENSION OFFICE

Jamie Bruns received this inquiry. It is a great example demonstrating the importance of pictures!

A Grimes county resident sought advice regarding his small pond. This is the dialogue that followed:

He said his pond has been full of fish and seemed to be doing quite well until recently. Over 1/2 of the pond has become covered in an algae that starts out green and then turns red. It has the consistency of "the crust on top of a pie" on the water. He thinks that the fish are suffering and he wants to know how to get rid of the algae without harming the fish.

Jamie took this question to our sources at Texas A&M Extension. Todd Sink, PhD asked if it looked like this:

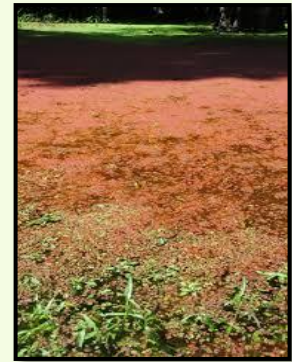


If so, the presence of a surface film, significant clumping or matting, and a color change from green to red indicates that you have a cyanobacteria (often called bluegreen algae) problem. Cyanobacteria are some of the oldest and most adaptable organisms on earth. Several species found in the South produce substances that cause taste and odor problems in water supplies and aquacultural products. Some blue-green algae produce toxins poisonous to fish and to wildlife and livestock that drink contaminated water. Cyanobacteria can disrupt the food chain and consequently the production of fish. They also produce chemicals that can inhibit competing good algae and invertebrate grazers that fish feed on. Most problems associated with cyanobacteria for fish are oxygen depletion during night time hours rather than the toxins. However, the role of cyanobacteria and the toxins they produce in fish kills is not clear. There are thousands of ponds in Texas and many of them have relatively frequent blooms of cyanobacteria. Yet there are only a few reports of fish kills that are directly related to algal toxin production. So the mere presence of toxin-producing algae does not necessarily mean that enough toxins will be produced to harm fish in the ponds.

To treat for cyanobacteria, the standard algaecide of choice is copper. You must always be careful when applying copper to water containing fish, because there is a fine line between concentrations that kill algae and

concentrations that kill fish. Always apply the algaecide according to the label. The label is not only your guide to protect yourself and your fish, but is also the LAW. The efficacy of copper sulfate algaecides is only 50% as effective (i.e. it takes twice as much copper) as that of Cutrine Plus (copper ethanolamine). Cutrine Plus is also more effective than standard chelated copper compounds. You can buy Cutrine plus from Amazon and many other websites for \$30-50 per gallon (probably from a few local farm stores as well). To apply, determine the volume of water to be treated in acre-feet. 1 acre foot is 1 acre of water 1 foot deep, so a 0.5 acre pond that is 5 feet deep would be 2.5 acre feet. Use 1 gallon of Cutrine plus liquid per 1.5 acre-feet of water. Dilute with a minimum of 9 parts water. Spray uniformly over the water surface with a tank or backpack sprayer. Allow material to rain down in coarse droplets for better surface penetration.

Upon further correspondence with the Plantersville resident, it was discovered his pond looked more like this:



Todd Sink, PhD replied: that is Azolla, aka mosquito fern. It is an aquatic fern that turns from green during the spring and summer to red during the fall and winter. The best aquatically approved herbicides for controlling Azolla are fluridone, flumioxazin, and penoxsulam. All three are very expensive. I would recommend fluridone or penoxsulam because they are systemic herbicides that will kill the entire plant and are easy to use because they can be added directly to the water. Flumioxazin is a contact herbicide and only kills the plants it comes into contact with. That means it must be sprayed on and each and every plant must be contacted or it will repopulate from any remaining plants that aren't contacted by the herbicide.

Mozambique tilapia can be stocked in the spring as a biological control. However they will only aid in control by reducing the population, not totally eradicate it. Tilapia also die off in the fall when water temperatures fall below 55F, so they must be restocked each spring.

## THE ANDERSON BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

By Janeth Nevill

I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to all who came out to help with the supervision and planting of the beds along Main Street in Anderson. I really appreciate the Master Gardeners who came to help the very enthusiastic kids from Anderson-Shiro ISD (ASISD). MG's included Mike Arden, Jamie Bruns, Dia Copeland, Ann DeWitt, Kimberly Erhardt, Kathy Laughlin and Sharon Murry. On past workdays we also had Marti Luedtke, Edmond McGee and Peggy Sloan. If I left any out I apologize.

Marty Thomas and Dorothy Holtkamp of Whitehall Trees provided their equipment and ASISD Senior Alea Carroll's father also brought his Bobcat. Having two machines enabled us to make quick work of mixing and dumping the compost mix to amend the beds.

After the amendment, the kids with supervision leveled and raked the soil and Ann gave a lesson on how to plant properly. As we went bed by bed, they also learned how important it is to properly space plants and how to judge distance and the sequence and importance of planting according to a landscape design.

The kids had a great time. They stayed happy, engaged, and were excited to learn new things and do the work.

This project has been a long journey but we are nearing the end. I know it has been very frustrating for our MG group and interest and support was lost when we ran into legal and logistical difficulties. The late Edmond McGee and Sharon Murry stuck it out even when the odds were overwhelming that this would ever clear the enormous hurdles with TXDOT, the City, the County, and weather issues. Former MG Barbara Szymczak worked long hours with Edmond compiling the list of plants that TXDOT would approve; Sharon Murry and Cathey Hardeman cared for the plants that were donated for the project from late October until plant date; Marti Luedtke took care of the crinum lilies; Alea and her group took care of the cemetery irises; Dorothy Holtkamp took care of the Martha Gonzales roses donated by Edmond McGee.

I am very grateful to all the MG's who have come out on the last minute work days to help move this project along. It would not have been successful without the abundant help of our generous donors and partners. This is not just a MG project, community/county project. We have many partners and need all of them to make this a successful project. With MG guidance we have been able

to implement the plan but the real work has been done by all the volunteers and donors. We could not have moved forward without the donated time, equipment, supplies, design and implementation of the irrigation system provided by White Hall Trees. Their contribution to the project, if it were purchased, would be in excess of \$22K.

The soil that was needed to refill the beds was donated by Mike Pullinen owner of Yankee's Tavern. The majority of the beautiful plants were generously donated by Stewart Thompson, owner of Martha's Bloomers Home Depot in Magnolia. We purchased the remainder from Treeseach Farms.

Alea Carroll and her group from ASISD worked very hard seeking the donations of troughs from different individuals in the County. They also were successful in getting compost and mulch donated from Brazos Valley Water Alliance. We could not have excavated the beds, moved soil, or planted without the hard work of these kid. Alea's parents and several other parents put in many hours of hard labor along with these kids. We also received manpower from the Sherriff's Office on two occasions.

Other partners in this project were: The City of Anderson, business owners downtown Anderson, The County, The Fire Department, The Sherriff's Office, TXDOT and generous folks from our county and surrounding counties who gave monetary donations because they love our Historic County Seat and want to see it enhanced and beautified. We have a historic jewel right in our midst that has been ignored far too long.

Two Roses were chosen as the foundation or "bones" of the design:

1. Belinda's Dream Roses were planted in Memory of Edmond McGee. Introduced in 1992, this gorgeous shrub rose is disease tolerant and has gorgeous flowers. Used as a specimen plant, a hedge or even in a large pot, this rose has the impact and beauty of a modern hybrid tea, but is much more disease and soil tolerant. It was the first rose to be designated Earth-Kind® by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. The large, very double pink blossoms come in large clusters from spring until frost. Bred in Texas to withstand hot temperatures, it does well in temperate climates as well.

2. Ducher Roses were planted because of the date significance. The Ducher rose was bred in France in the year 1869; Ducher, pronounced "doo-shay", is one of a very few white China roses. Petals of the medium size blooms are pure white though the light reflected often takes on a creamy color. The bush has been described as looking like snow in a pine forest.

## HOE! HOE! HOE! GCMG NEWSLETTER

The double blooms have a fruity fragrance. Ducher tolerates heat, sun and various soil conditions.

The site of Anderson was donated in 1850 by Henry Fanthorp, the first permanent settler in the County. The present courthouse is the third courthouse to be built in Anderson and was completed in 1891 and designated as a Texas Historic Landmark in 1965. The first elected officials for the town of Anderson held office in 1867.

3. Martha Gonzales Rose was included as an accent rose, chosen because of its county significance. This is a "found" rose from Navasota Gardener Martha Gonzales. The story of the "Martha Gonzalez" rose: "Martha Gonzales" is a found rose with a truly heart-warming story behind it. As the story has been passed down, Pam Puryear, a well-known Texas Rose Rustler, and Dallas Rosarian Joe Woodward were rose rustling. While they were driving in when they spotted the roses in the yard of a lady named Martha Gonzales while still a block away. Mrs. Gonzales kindly let them take cuttings of her 'Old Blush' and 'Mrs. Dudley Cross' specimens. Joe Woodward insisted that they should also take cuttings of the "little red China" rose, although Pam was not particularly enthusiastic about it. Well, the "little red China" rose turned out to be a treasure.

When Pam returned the next year for some more cuttings, the house seemed to be vacant, the rose was gone and it seemed that Martha Gonzales had passed away! But that is not the end of the story. In the fall of 1999, I was contacted by the granddaughter of Martha Gonzales who had seen this web page and wanted to know if I had a picture of Martha Gonzales (the woman, not the rose). I sent a picture and learned that Martha Gonzales was still alive. Martha Gonzales was told that her little rose had become really famous. She passed away the spring of 2000, but her name lives on in this wonderful little rose that was snatched just in time from oblivion and possible extinction. It is a smaller bushy shrub rose that gets about 2-3 ft. with dark green foliage that in winter has a burgundy hint. The single flowers are bright scarlet and open flat showing a beautiful bright yellow stamen. It is a fragrant old rose and is drought and disease tolerant.

After the roses were chosen, Ann worked on a landscape design implementing natives and drought tolerant plants that will have bloom times from spring through frost and evergreens to provide color through winter.

Source for rose information: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>

# Anderson Beautification Project



*Dia Copelalnd, Ann DeWitt, Janeth Nevill, Dorothy Holtcamp  
Kimberly Erhardt, Kathy Laughlin and Sharon Murry*



*Anderson-Shiron ISD students*



*The students hard at work leveling the soil mix*



*Machines make light work!*



*ABP Chair Janeth Nevill with Ann DeWitt*



*Planting commences!*