



HOE! HOE! HOE!

Grimes County Master Gardeners Newsletter

Winner of the Texas Master Gardener Association

2nd Place Newsletter Award 2006

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After the work day on 1/28/11. All is weed-free and ship-shape at the Fairgrounds, ready for Go-Texan Weekend.



The roses look like they have suffered a hard winter, but will no doubt benefit from a shaping and pruning when the time is right. Be watching for notices about future work days.

Plans are under way for the new Beautification of Main Street, Anderson. GCMG already helps with the maintenance of the roses in front of the historic Grimes County Courthouse, with the assistance of the Adult Probation Department, so this new project should really make a difference to the appearance of our County Seat.

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Fundraiser: Linda Jolly
Awards/Social: Connie Arden

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VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE

FEBRUARY PLANTING

12/20 – 3/5 Carrots
1/15-3/15 – Asparagus
1/5-3/5 – Beets
1/20-3/5 – Broccoli
1/1-3/15 – Garlic
1/20-3/10 - Kale
1/20-3/10 – Kohlrabi
1/20-3/15 – Lettuce (head)
1/15-3/20 – Lettuce (leaf)
1/20-4/15 – Mustard
1/20-2/20 – Spinach
1/15-4/20 – Turnips
1/15-2/5 – Onions (plants)
1/20-2/20 – Peas (English)
1/25-3/5 Peas (Edible Pod)
1/25-5/5 – Radish



Cauliflower - Brassica oleracea (Botrytis Group)

Cauliflower is finicky. If its needs aren't met, it will disappoint. Briefly, it prefers a rich, well-drained, loamy soil, high in nitrogen, with a slightly acid or neutral pH; a rapid, vigorous growth period with mild temperatures; and an ample supply of water, especially during dry spells. Because spring-planted cauliflower runs a greater risk of failure due to a sudden rise in temperature, most gardeners settle for a fall crop. But, with a little extra care, you can raise two crops of cauliflower - one early and one late.

Sunlight turns cauliflower curds an unappetizing brown but doesn't affect their flavor. To keep the curds white (blanching), gather the longest leaves together over the curd and tie them with soft twine, raffia, or tape, when the plants are dry.

The cauliflower in the picture was planted in the fall of 2009 along with five others, plus cabbages and broccoli. All appeared to have been destroyed by snails, but one lonely plant came back and grew all through the heat of summer 2010. In mid January 2011 I noticed it had "self-blanching" and when I pulled back the leaves, this is what I found! From garden to steamer to plate - just can't beat that!!



Helen Quinn

ON THE CALENDAR February/March 2011

- Feb 08 GCMG Reg. Monthly Meeting – Program by Dr. Paul Nestor on “Ants” at 9.00 am.
Feb 10 **GC Chamber After Hours Mixer 5.30-7.30 hosted by Farmers Market (inside building)**
Feb 19 TMGA Directors’ Meeting 11.00-3.00, Forest Sci/Hort Building, TAMU (parking #74)
Mar 08 GCMG Reg. Monthly Meeting – Program on “Recycling” – details TBA
Mar 15 Field trip to Montgomery Co. MG facility in Conroe – see below
Mar 18-19 Herbal Forum at Round Top. Reservations 979-249-3129 or online at festivalhill.org

We are confirmed to go the Montgomery County extension office on March 15 at 10:00. We will be going on a tour of the facility and the greenhouses. This will be an "additional field trip" for our group, in addition to our regular March meeting. Car pooling would be good – we'll talk about it at our February meeting.

Grimes County Fair June 4 – 11, 2011

Anyone wishing to enter plants in the Horticulture Division at the County Fair must be in possession of such at least 3 months prior to show. That means by March 1st (or March 4th if you want to be precise.) All entries must be in good condition, free from dirt, disease, and insects, and pots should be squeaky clean!!

Plant categories are:

- Class 39 Container Plants (ex. Cactus, Fern, Violets, etc.)
- Class 40 Terrariums
- Class 41 Hanging Baskets
- Class 42 Cut Flowers
- Class 43 Herbs
- Class 44 Miscellaneous (one item other than those listed)

For details of other classes in Creative Arts & Living Division, check the website grimescountyfair.com, or the Fair Book at the Extension Office.

*GCMG Regular meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month
at the Go Texan Building, Grimes Co. Fairgrounds, 9.00 am.,
except as noted below. Two field trips are planned annually,
and two evening meetings held at
members' homes to enable
members who work to participate.*

REMINDER: IF YOU HAVEN'T YET PAID, DUES OF \$18 FOR CERTIFIED MGs ARE DUE. BRING YOUR PAYMENT TO FEB MEETING OR MAIL IT IN. THE CUT-OFF DATE IS FEBRUARY 15TH.

NO PAY, NO PLAY!!!

LOVE NOTES

Submitted by Sandra Williams



Love-Lies-Bleeding, *Amaranthus caudatus*.
Love-in-a-Mist, *Nigella damascena*
Bleeding Heart, *Dicentra spectabilis*
Cupid's Dart, *Catananche caerulea*
Heartseed, Love-in-a-puff, *Cardiospermum halicacabum*
Hearts-a-Burstin', *Euonymus americanus*
Love Apple, *Solanum aculeatissimum*,
Venus Flytrap, *Dionaea muscipula*
Cupid's Bower, *Achimenes longiflora*
Bleeding Heart Glory Bower, *Clerodendron thomsoniae*

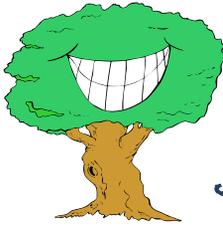
CRINUM – THE ULTIMATE NO CARE PLANT Submitted by Carolyn Guillotte

I have several no care plants that include the Japanese Holly Fern, the Lady Banks' Rose and Mexican Petunias. But, none make me happier than the Crinum. I have seen my crinums stand up to the blazing sun and to the freezing sleet and snow.

Crinum is of the genus of the Amaryllidaceae family and is often mistaken for the Amaryllis. There are over 100 species of crinums. *Crinum bulbispermum*, *Crinum herbertii* (milk and wine), *Crinum powelli*, J. C. Harvey and Ellen Bosanquet are among the most commonly cultivated species. The flowers range from white, light to dark pink and red with huge strapping leaves. Crinums range in size with some adorned with tiny flowers and some six to seven feet in height.

Crinums bulbs should be planted in rich well-drained soil, preferably in the early summer or fall. It is helpful to add composted manure and water in the blooming season. Many crinums multiply quickly. Some advise moving crinums every seven years and others recommend leaving the mother plant and removing the surrounding bulbs.

Crinums are truly a no care plant.



SMILE GARDEN

Submitted by Connie Arden

Smiling is the beginning of laughter.....plant some smile seeds to grow into laughter and reap blossoms of positive physical, mental, and social benefits.

CABBAGE always has a heart;

GREEN BEANS string along.

You're such a TOMATO,

Will you PEAS to me belong?

You've been the APPLE of my eye,

You know how much I care;

So LETTUCE get together,

We'd make a perfect PEAR.

Now, something's sure to TURNIP,

To prove you can't be BEET;

So, if you CARROT at all for me

Let's let our TULIPS meet.

Don't SQUASH my hopes and dreams now,

Bee my honey, dear;

Or tears will fill POTATO'S eyes,

While SWEET CORN lends an ear.

I'll CAULIFLOWER shop and say

Your dreams are PARSLEY mine.

I'll work and share my CELERY,

So be my Valentine.

BUDGET GARDENING

Pay a fraction of the cost for a multitude of plants – annuals, biennials and veg. Browse through seed catalogues on a cold January day and plan for the coming year.

Keep an eye out for healthy, discounted plants at the end of seasons, buy plants without flowers, buy mini-sized pots of quick growing plants. (Check the root system in the pot!)

Work with your microclimate and soil conditions, see what does well locally.

Many plants are easy to grow from cuttings, division or self-seed. Ask neighbors and friends for cuttings.

Swap surplus seeds or seedlings or club together with friends and buy bulbs in bulk.

All kinds of household things can be re-used with a little ingenuity – for containers or sculptural focal points. Grow some bamboo or willows and use the stems for stakes and hurdles.

Evergreens and plants that give a long season of interest – flowers, berries, foliage color – form the backbone of the garden. Fill in with hardy perennials rather than expensive bedding plants.

Use garden and kitchen waste for free organic matter for your garden, collect rainwater, and mulch.

Rejuvenate old furniture, pots and supports with a touch of paint.

Our March meeting will cover “Recycling” - what are your favorite recycling tips? Things that work, and things that don't. 20+ years ago I had some old indoor-outdoor carpet that I wanted to get rid of, and decided to use it to suppress weeds, with pine bark mulch on top. That carpet still hasn't disintegrated, and is impossible to remove because of all the weeds and grass that have grown up through it! That must have been some carpet!

