



Hoe! Hoe! Hoe!

June 2012

GRIMES COUNTY MASTER GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 8, ISSUE VI

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Officers for 2012

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Vice President: Kathy Laughlin
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Treasurer: Connie Arden

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Children's Activities: Jennifer Corzine
Communications: Nicky Maddams
(Mentor: Helen Quinn)
Class: Jennifer Corzine/Kathy Laughlin
Co-op: Fred Vesperman
Anderson Beautification: Janeth Nevill
Publicity: Peggy Sloan
Fundraiser: Connie Arden/Kathy Denning
Go Texan Landscaping: Mike Arden
County Fair Judging: Linda Jolly

Texas AgriLife Extension

MG Coordinator: Shane Jennings
Secretary: Sandra Curl

Newsletter

Editor: Nicky Maddams

Article submissions, photos and information due by the 20th of each month

Send to: biplanechik@yahoo.ca

Website: txmg.org/grimes

Email: grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

June 4-6 "Big Backyard" at Grimes County Fair

June 6 "Seniors Day" at Grimes County Fair

June 12 9:00am Monthly Meeting
Linda Crum (President of the Texas Bluebird Society) will present "Attracting Bluebirds to the Garden"

July 10 9:00am Monthly Meeting
Ann LaLeon (Texas Master Certified Nursery Professional) will present "Heat Tolerant Plants/Plants that Survived 2011 Drought"

August 14 9:00am Monthly Meeting
Joe Floyd will present "Moths"



State Conference Report

Five Master Gardeners (and one intern) attended the State Conference in San Antonio.



Get to Know Your Fellow Master Gardeners!

Visit with Fred Vesperman and Lynn Whitcher



CLASS OF 2012

May 15th marked the graduation of the latest group of Master Gardener interns! Congratulations to all – now the work begins!

Graduates include:

(Back, left to right) Maureen Isenhour, Lynn Whitcher, Jennifer McKinney, Scotty Bennett, Michael Brame, Pat Randall, Dianna Westmoreland, Cathey Hardeman, Marguerite Corbello, Ann DeWitt, Kendra Pate.

(Front, left to right) Nicky Maddams, Marti Luedtke, Phyllis Pollard, Jamie Bruns, Kat McMullen

Missing from photo: Martha Brogdon and Jack Calvin.



Tenth Anniversary

In conjunction with the graduation was the celebrated TEN YEARS of Master Gardeners in Grimes County!



After a delicious potluck lunch, we enjoyed cake for dessert!



Connie Arden and Michael Brame put up the banner.



President Jennifer Corzine welcomed all master gardeners and dignitaries



Martha's Bloomers donated this lovely oak tree to commemorate our anniversary



The three charter Master Gardeners: Sharon Murry, Stewart Thompson and Peggy Sloan.



Navasota Mayor Bert Miller, Grimes County Judge Betty Shifflet and 2012 Grad Jennifer McKinney



FRED VESPERMAN

Where were you born and how long have you lived in Texas?

I was born in Austin, Texas and have lived in Texas all my life except for two years in Kentucky (where I met Alvie).

Where is the farthest you have traveled from Texas?

Israel, Germany, Honduras, Maine, California

Where would you go on your dream vacation?

Believe it or not, my dream vacation is living on our ranch with Alvie. God has truly blessed me.

What is your favorite flower and tree? Do you grow them?

My favorite flower is Amaryllis, which we grow. I think my favorite tree is a huge pecan, which we don't grow, but we have several native Hickory trees which are a little similar.

Where is the prettiest garden you have ever been to and what made it so?

I think the prettiest garden I've seen is the Ruby Mize Azalea Garden in Nacogdoches. It is a "natural" garden with hundreds of varieties of Azaleas along wooded trails – lots and lots of color.

What restaurant do you go to more than any other?

We used to visit Koko's at the Texas Star Winery until they closed. They will be reopening, and I'm eager.

What is your favorite season?

Spring! Nothing cures the winter blues like Dogwoods, Redbuds, and Daffodils.

Why are you a Master Gardener or Intern?

Alvie was our family pioneer in Master Gardeners. I started going to a meeting/class here and there and then finally decided to take the classes and become a member. I enjoy learning things about gardening, being with gardening people, and sharing stuff about gardening that I have learned.

What is the closest you have been to a natural disaster?

We have lived through a direct tornado, two direct hurricanes, an ice storm, and two wildfires very close by.

When was the last "back to nature" experience you have had?

I consider living here on the ranch is "back to nature" every day. The biggest experience was taking our boys on a 120 mile backpacking trip when they were teenagers... all above 7000 feet. The latest was probably driving down the Red River Gorge in Kentucky.

Where would you like to go that is "off the beaten bath"?

Hmmm. We like to make an occasional day trip just driving around on some back road. There are good hints about such places in Texas Highways magazine.

What vegetable do you hate?

I pretty much like my vegetables. Probably one I'm not too fond of is lima beans.

What do you love the smell of?

Jasmine

What is your favorite ice cream?

I like Blue Bell Fat Free Strawberry Frozen Yogurt (and Dairy Queen Chocolate Malts).

What chore do you absolutely hate doing?

I think I would put cleaning the bathroom at the bottom of my list.

What electronic gadget could you not live without?

There aren't any I couldn't live without.

Are you a social butterfly or do you prefer solitary endeavors?

I don't think I fit either category. I hate crowds and I don't much like being alone. I like being in small groups. Alvie and I do a lot of things together.

Name one wonderful childhood memory involving gardening.

I remember learning that popcorn grew on a plant. As an object lesson, my mother helped me plant and grow some popcorn, which I tended, picked, dried, and popped. I thought that was absolutely amazing.

What would you say is your garden style? (Country, cottage, formal, sculptural, etc.)

We pretty much grow one of everything, which I think is (tongue-in-cheek) called Arboretum style. I remember the Landscape MG class saying if you don't plan, that is what you will end up with.



Amaryllis in Fred & Alvie's garden

June Vegetable Planting Guide

It's getting pretty hot to be planting much of anything to give it a fair chance of survival, but there are a few that you could still squeeze in.

3/20-6/15 – Cucumber

3/25-6/10 – Eggplant

4/5-6/15 – Peas, Southern

4/5-6/15 – Peppers

3/15-6/15 – Squash, Summer & Winter

Seed Exchange

Ann DeWitt has spearheaded a seed exchange. Start saving seeds from your plants as they mature and we will look at a date to do an exchange!

Hemerocallis sp

The wonderful Daylily!

Submitted by Helen Quinn

Daylilies are enjoying a resurgence of popularity, so it might be timely to explore the facts and fictions of this beautiful flower. Written Chinese descriptions of daylilies date from about 3000 B.C., and the first illustration appeared in a *Materia Medica (Tu Ching Yen I Pen Tsao)* compiled by Kou Tsung-Shih, in 1059 A.D. Traditionally in China, they were grown for their nutritional and medicinal properties. They were considered a popular cure for melancholy and grief, and it was claimed that if a pregnant woman wore a daylily she would give birth to a son.

Daylilies made their first appearance in Europe in the 16th century. It is believed that medieval Mongolian settlers planted the yellow *Hemerocallis fulva* in Hungary, and that the orange *H. fulva* was carried by traders to either Venice or Lisbon. Later in the 16th century, European herbalists (Dodonaeus, Clusius and Lobelius) described and illustrated both species. They noted that *H. fulva* did not produce seeds. The term "Day Lillie" first appeared in Gerard's *The Herball or Generall Historie of Plants* (1597). A century later, the pilgrims brought them to America. Settlers carried the sturdier *H. fulva* west with them and it became known as the homestead lily. George Yeld, a British school teacher with a love for alpine flowers and access to a local nursery, started to hybridise daylilies in 1877. His original cultivar, "Apricot" won a Certificate of Merit in London in June 1892, and three years later the newly acquired *H. aurantiaca var. major*, set his breeding program off with new vigor. This variety became the parent for many of his best introductions, and about this time, another Englishman, Amos Perry started his own breeding program from a collection of plants from Italy. Fast forward a couple of hundred years, and we now have possibly thousands of named varieties, thanks to the breeders and hybridizers in their quest to produce flowers of all shapes and sizes in a veritable rainbow of colors.

Diploid, Tetraploid - what does this mean? It is all in the chromosomes! Diploids have 22 chromosomes, 1 set of 11 from the pod parent and 1 set of 11 from the pollen parent. Tetraploids have 44 chromosomes, giving them twice the genetic materials as diploids. This gives the hybridizer more opportunity for breaks, or more dramatic advances than made with a diploid. Triploids are seldom seen now in Daylilies. They have

a triple set of chromosomes and are generally infertile. Diploids can only be bred to Diploids, and Tetraploids to Tetraploids. Even if you don't want to venture into hybridization, Daylilies are a joy in the garden, and if you can bear to dig them up, enjoy them at your dinner table!! If Daylily flowers are harvested when fully open they make a superb and very ornamental addition to the salad bowl. The petals are quite thick, crisp and juicy with a delicate sweetness at their base due to the nectar they contain. At this stage they are also at their most nutritious, containing reasonable quantities of protein (mainly from their pollen) and carbohydrates (from the nectar) as well as good quantities of iron and vitamin A. The flowers can be dried and used as a flavoring and thickener in soups, etc. Young shoots & roots can also be eaten raw or cooked, and make a delicious vegetable. The tough fibrous leaves can be dried & braided into ropes to make a fine pair of summer sandals!!



Hemerocallis Pandora's Box

... a flower which perisheth at night,
and buddeth at the sunne rising, and
therefore is called the Day Lillie, or
Lillie for a day. John Gerard, 1597

Did you miss the presentation by the Ardens on FireWise Landscaping? Here's another chance to learn.

FireWise & WaterSmart

Saturday, June 23, 2012

9:00am-1:30 pm at the Texas Forest Service,
200 Technology Way, College Station
\$25 per person, includes snacks and beverages.

Topics include:

- FireWise Urban Landscaping
- WaterSmart Landscape Irrigation & Rainwater Harvesting
- DIY - Plumbing Your Low Volume Watering System

Final details and registration information to be posted at: www.brazosmg.com

Fruits and vegetables in prevention of cancer: Scientific oddity or clinical reality

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

7:00pm-8:00pm at the Brazos Center, Room 102 Free

Mom's conventional wisdom of eating fruits and vegetables to lead a healthy life has evolved with scientific, fact-finding research during the last four decades due to advances in science of "Foods for Health".

Presented by Dr. Bhimanagouda S. Patil, Director of Texas A&M's Vegetable and Fruit Improvement Center and Professor in the Department of Horticultural Sciences.



LYNN WHITCHER

Where were you born and how long have you lived in Texas?

I was born in Navasota and lived in Los Angeles as a child. We moved back to Navasota while in high school and lived in Houston for 50 years.

Where is the farthest you have traveled from Texas?

Canada is the farthest.

Where would you go on your dream vacation?

On an Amazon River Cruise

Where is the prettiest garden you have ever been to?

The San Francisco Botanical Gardens.

What restaurant do you go to more than any other?

Any Mexican restaurant

What is your favorite season?

Spring

Why are you a Master Gardener or Intern?

I love gardening and the outdoors.

What is the closest you have been to a natural disaster?

Hurricane Ike

When was the last "back to nature" experience you have had?

Every day while walking the dog in the woods.

Where would you like to go that is "off the beaten bath"?

Again, any rainforest.

What vegetable do you hate?

I like all vegetables fried or raw.

What is your favorite ice cream?

Any Bluebell ice cream.

What electronic gadget could you not live without?

My computer!

Are you a social butterfly or do you prefer solitary endeavors?

Both; I love people but enjoy quiet time.

Name one wonderful childhood memory involving gardening.

Moving back to Texas and growing (with help!) 100 acres of watermelons!

What would you say is your garden style? (Country, cottage, formal, sculptural, etc.)

Robust, big, tropical....lots!

Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul.

Texas Master Gardeners State Conference – San Antonio

Jennifer Corzine, Kathy Laughlin, Linda Jolly, Mike & Connie Arden and Nicky Maddams took in the 2012 Texas Master Gardener Conference, "Riverwalk and Garden Talk," hosted by the Bexar County Master Gardeners and Texas AgriLife Extension.

Workshops attended included Toxic Plants in the Landscape, Composting, What Trees Do for Our Lives, The Earth-Kind Home Orchard, Slow Gardening: A No-Stress Philosophy for All Senses and Seasons, Organic Gardening and more.

The 2013 Conference will be hosted by Hidalgo and Cameron Counties and take place in October to take advantage of the Monarch butterfly migration and cooler temperatures.



We were impressed with the creative use of Cora Vinca!



Vendors ranged from composters (mechanical and worms!), soil amenders to accessories and tools.



The Bexar County MG'ers put on a great plant sale. The prices continued to decrease as the week progressed!



This is what happens when Master Gardeners hit a plant sale! No room for more!



Friday night awards banquet – next year for us?!

More Photos!!!

I have a lot of photos in this edition of the newsletter – so many events took place! Thanks to submissions from Sharon Murry and Helen Quinn.

Enjoy!



Sharon Murry taught an informative and practical class on composting.



A fun, hands-on class taught by Helen Quinn on propagation



Helen shows Michael exactly how to make the cut

Workday at the future extension office



After tidying up the rose beds at the Go Texan building, we started clean-up at the new location.



A great Spring Social at the Nevill residence!



Nicky and Maureen dish up the dirt (er, soil!)



Kendra, Jennifer and Marti with their new starts