



# The Grapevine

*The newsletter of the Lubbock County Master Gardeners Association*  
**April 2018**

## **Vikram Baliga Moving to Texas Tech**



I've recently been offered, and have chosen to accept, the position of teaching/research greenhouse manager and instructor of horticulture at Texas Tech. It's all come about fairly quickly and I'll be finishing out March with Extension and starting with Tech on April 2. I've enjoyed getting to know each of you and having the opportunity to work with the Lubbock Master Gardeners Association over the past 4 years. You have taught me more than I can tell about horticulture and being an effective educator. I'll miss all of you very much, but luckily I'm not going very far! I'm going to be coming up with what will hopefully be new and

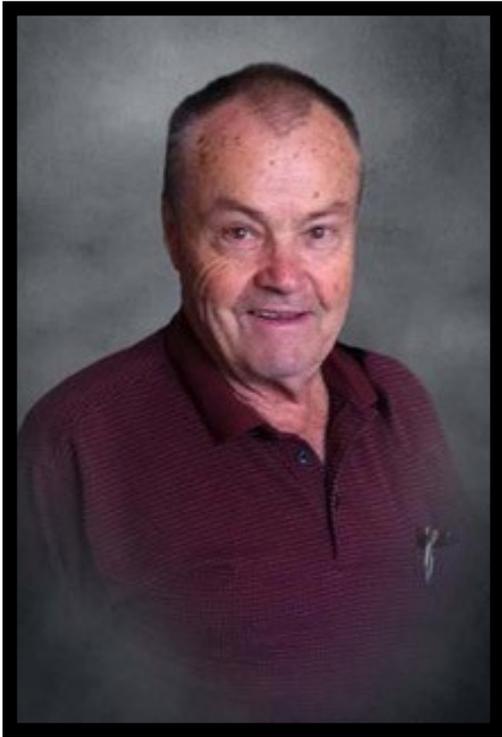
engaging volunteer opportunities at the Tech greenhouse and hope to stay involved with LMGA through that, if nothing else. I am confident that Extension will fill my position fairly quickly with a great new agent, but I have full faith in the Lubbock Master Gardeners to carry on high quality horticulture education in Lubbock until then.

Thanks for all the time, hard work, and friendship. It has really meant the world to me. I'm planning to be at the April general meeting to say hi/bye to everyone.



**April  
Calendar**

**Tuesday, 4-3**  
**March General Meeting**  
6:30 pm  
Covenant Presbyterian Church  
Topic: Vegetable Gardening in Containers  
Presenter: Master Gardener Dennis Howard  
This Program Counts as 1 CEU.



**Saturday, 4-14**  
**Second Saturday at the Arboretum**  
10:00 am  
Maximizing Water Efficiency for Your Lawn  
Presenter: Dr. Joey Young, TTU  
This program counts as 1 CEU.

**Bob Neal** was a Lubbock Master Gardener pioneer in the 1994 class. He passed away Saturday, March 17, 2018. Family and friends gathered to celebrate his life of 78 years at Focal Pointe Fellowship. A tribute to Bob's life may be found at [www.memorialdesigners.net](http://www.memorialdesigners.net), where you may leave memories and expressions of sympathy for his family.

**Saturday, 4-21**  
**Arboretum Plant Sale**  
**Arboretum**  
9:00-3:00



**Saturday, 4-14 and Sunday, 4-15**  
**Lubbock Arts Festival**  
Civic Center  
Master Gardeners will have a booth and we need volunteers for set up and to staff the booth. Please let Grady Cowart know if you can help.  
[grayco57@icloud.com](mailto:grayco57@icloud.com)

*To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under Heaven.*



# Spring Rose Gardening

*by Nell Rains, Master Gardener, Rosarian and Earth-Kind Specialist*

Spring is finally here. Here are some tips to get roses off to a good start.

**Bare root roses plants:** If you have ordered bare root roses, be sure that you are ready to plant them right away, in late March or early April. Un-pack them and soak the roots for 24 hours in a bucket of room temperature water to which you have added a product such as Super-Thrive.

**Grafted rose plants:** Most hybrid-Teas, Floribunda, and Grandiflora roses are grafted, which means that a rose is created by grafting a “Top”, onto a strong root stock. Plant this knobby part called the bud union, 2 to 3 inches below the soil line.

**Own root rose plants:** These are rose plants that have been started from a stem cutting. They are considered to be hardier and longer lived than grafted roses.

**Soil:** It is important to give roses the best growing medium. A soil rich in organic matter is healthier and grows better plants. Organic matter added to sandy soil helps moisture to remain longer, and in clay soil it helps to open up the profile to allow drainage and better air flow. A raised bed that gets at least of six hours of sun daily is ideal for growing roses.

**When planting bare root roses,** dig a hole only deep enough to cover the roots, then put a mound of soil in the middle of the hole. Spread the roots over the pile of soil and backfill the hole with soil. Water until the roots are stable adding soil to cover any exposed roots. For all roses planted bare root, mulch should be mounded up to cover the crown and canes for six weeks. This will keep the canes from drying out while the rose gets established.

**When planting container roses,** dig a hole and place the pot into it to see if it is deep enough to position the rose at the same level at which it was growing. Add a handful of alfalfa pellets to the hole. Avoid breaking apart the soil ball by cutting the container away from the rose, rather than pulling the plant out of the pot. Plant the rose in the soil and water in.

**Fertilizer:** When the rose begins to have leaves it is time to fertilize. Sustained use of synthetic fertilizers without adding organic matter back into soil will deteriorate the soil structure. During the first year, granular fertilizers are too hard for young, own-root roses to process. Granular fertilizers can quickly burn the root and kill the rose. When planting a new rose, do not add any organic potting soil that says, “self-feeding” or “slow release”. Regular feeding should be done with a liquid fish emulsion after the rose becomes established.

**Watering:** Once fertilizer has been applied, apply a deep watering to get nutrients broken down and taken up by the rose. Apply water at the base of the plant, as wet leaves are more susceptible to fungal disease like black spot. Water deeply and less frequently and avoid overwatering which causes plant roots to become waterlogged and die. Established roses will be more drought tolerant than new or young plants so it is important to monitor. Water rose plants by the finger test. Stick finger one inch deep into soil, if dry apply one inch of water. Keep the bed moist and covered with mulch to reduce stress on rose bushes.

**Apply 2- 3 inches of mulch.** Mulch helps soil retain moisture, helps prevent weeds, and gives the garden a finished look. When mulch breaks down, it uses nitrogen in the process so it is good to add a layer of compost as a top dressing to a layer of new mulch. Don't remove the old mulch. It is beginning to break down into nutrient rich humus. This living soil profile began with the incorporation of compost when you worked the beds the first time.



## Help Needed with Vegetable Survey

*by Dennis Howard*

I am working on a small project that I think will benefit everyone. But I need everyone's help.

I am trying to put together a suggested variety list of vegetables for Lubbock. TAMU puts out a list but it is relatively limited in some areas. I am interested in hearing from our members about the varieties with which they are familiar and have had good luck, and any tips or tricks they have gleaned from their experiences.

Please, if you grow veggies or herbs or companion plants in your garden, take a moment and visit the link below to participate in my small informal research project. My goal is to produce a Lubbock Master Gardeners Recommended Varieties List that everyone can use, hand out and, of course, keep updated and current.

Thanks for your help and participation.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F7FD3J2>

## Experiments 2018

*by Betsey Heavner*



What a treat to return to my garden on March 6 after 2 weeks of travel and see asparagus stalks!! This is the third year for these plants, planted in a northeast facing raised bed. I've added compost and mulch each fall and a drip irrigation for occasional watering during drought. I followed advice to let the roots develop, and this is the first harvest. Tender and yummy – these stalks didn't even make it to the kitchen!

I also found a Goji berry bush leafing out! These drought-tolerant, good-for-you berries have produced prolifically. Last summer, I encouraged the canes to root and it looks like the single bush I planted has multiplied.

There is more information about Goji berries here: <https://www.starkbros.com/products/berry-plants/goji-berry-plants> This experiment in gardening is showing very positive results!

Spring planting is always a gamble with mother nature. We have lots of warm days and sunshine, and an early planting sometimes means a crop before summer heat kills the plants or causes dormancy. So I continue to experiment! If there is a killing frost, I can always re-plant! )



*The Grapevine* is published monthly except December. Send articles and photo to Editor Cecilia George, [cfgeorge64@gmail.com](mailto:cfgeorge64@gmail.com)