

The Green Thumb

<http://nacogdoches-tx.tamu.edu>

A Quarterly Horticulture Newsletter for
The Nacogdoches County Master Gardeners & Other Horticulture Enthusiasts
Fall 2008



Inside this issue:
President's Message
New Master Gardeners
Chad's Chatter
Lunch'N'Learn Update
Demo Garden Update
Volunteer Opportunities

Did You Know?
Nominations
Special Interest
From the Editor

From the President

Things are moving along with the demonstration garden. Thanks to Tom Shone and James Lynch, the asphalt is being moved and space is being made for plantings. Make your thoughts known on where we should start and what we should plant.

Gerry Peacock

Master Gardener President

Newest Master Gardeners

At the October 7, 2008, meeting of the Nacogdoches County Commissioners Court, four new Master Gardeners were certified. This group of gardeners has worked diligently to complete all of their requirements and have done so in record time.

Congratulations to:

Christina Best

Dana Hasley

Mike Hasley

Rhonda Posey

What a wonderful and energetic addition they all are to Nacogdoches County.



Chad's Chatter

Well, fall is just around the corner (at least it was when the editor started this newsletter). Fall and spring are my two favorite seasons of the year. Leaves begin to fall from the trees and cooler weather will soon be upon us. Fall is a good time to plant bulbs. By now many have planted their fall gardens and will, in the near future, be reaping the fruits of their labor. Many people also begin preparing to plant wildflowers in the fall and winter months. The Master Gardeners have been very busy this year and I appreciate all their hard work on the various programs and projects around Nacogdoches County.

Chad Gulley

County Extension Agent—Ag/NR



Pictured (l to r) Rhonda Posey, Gerry Peacock (MG President), Dana Hasley, Mike Hasley and Christina Best.

Lunch'n'Learn

Due to Ike related interruptions, the October session of Lunch'n'Learn had to be cancelled. Hopefully, there will be another opportunity to hear Jeff Abt at a future date.

However, we still have November and December to look forward to hosting. Coming in November, the 13th to be exact, Larry Poe, the Ag teacher from Central Heights, will discuss Old Yard vs. Current Practices. And on December 11, 2008, our year winds down with a program on Flower Arrangements Using Natural Materials. This is an ideal topic with the holidays just around the corner.

So, mark the dates and remember to bring something for the lunch table. As the old adage says, "Variety is the spice of life" and this holds true on the plate and in the garden. Lunch'n'Learn is scheduled for the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 12 N at the Nacogdoches County Courthouse Annex – Community Room.



Pot Posse (verse 2)

Yep, pardner! Even though we just finished the 2008 version of the MG Plant Sale, it's time now to start preparing for 2009. And one of the first things we need to do is amass another inventory of plastic pots. So, if you have a stash or know of a stash or want to find a stash, then be on the look out for any source of pots. Dr. Carroll Gregory will gladly store any pots you acquire. He says the 1 gallon size are in high demand.

(Yes, this is a repeat article, but it is still very applicable.)



The Demonstration Garden

Have you checked it out lately? Tom Shone, thanks to the use of James Lynch's tractor, has single handedly scrapped up most of the asphalt along the University side of the garden. Not only did he move all of the dreaded asphalt, but he managed to lay it back down in the form of pathways in strategic areas elsewhere in the garden. Looks like the beginnings of some infrastructure is taking place.

But this is just a beginning, your input is still vital. So, pick up a copy of the garden plot at the CEO and go sit in the garden and let your imagination run wild. What would you like to see demonstrated out there? It's like being a painter with a blank canvas. Your ideas will help determine what color paints and which paint brushes we need.

Tom Shone says, "Now is the time to plant trees and get some other plant materials into the ground at the site." He requests that members contact him to schedule a time they would like to do some planting. Tom encourages all members to come out and view the wide variety of trees and plants that have been given to our garden and then select the place you would like to see some of these specimens planted.

Our site is taking shape, but there is still much to do on this long-range project. So, anytime you want to work at the site, just stop on by. Right now there is debris from Ike and other trash related items that need to be removed. And, thanks to Miss Debbie in the CEO and her trusty Kubota being driven by T.

Shone, we should soon see some ground being prepared for planting.

We continue to appreciate all the support we are receiving from local businesses and other area organizations. If you happen to do business or cross paths with any of these folks, please mention their gifts and thank them for supporting our efforts.

Thank You Very Much To:

Bailey Bark Materials - Nacogdoches Trees USA – Doug Arnold, owner- Lindale, TX

Briggate Farms, LLC – Rusk, TX

Dr. David Creech – SFASU – Nacogdoches

The SFASU Arboretum - Nacogdoches

The Pines Garden Club – Nacogdoches

The Four Seasons Garden Club – Nacogdoches

Vital Signs – Nacogdoches

Nacogdoches CVB – Nacogdoches

Naconiche Gardens – Nacogdoches

Worsham Landscaping - Nacogdoches

(We will maintain this list and add to it as other contributions and support are received.)



Thrips

Did You Know??????

Ornamental plants in the Houston landscape are being attacked by a new, invasive insect pest. *Chilli thrips*, an insect only 1/16th of an inch long is known to attack plants in at least 40 plant families including many of the foundation plants of the landscape, according to Dr. Scott Ludwig, AgriLife Extension Service entomologist.

“In Texas, ornamentals are the only plants they’ve been found on so far, but they have the potential to attack many other plants, including vegetables, blueberries, cotton and peanuts,” Dr. Ludwig said. “The most common plants we have seen them on so far have been roses of all types, including those that were previously thought to be tolerant to pest problems.”

To date, the *chilli thrips* have only been verified in Harris and Montgomery counties. But are we safe here in Nacogdoches County and other parts of East Texas? The potential for the spreading of this pest is obvious. We have just endured the hurricane force winds of Ike and have seen storm debris all over the place. As small as the insect is, it could easily be blown to unknown areas by strong winds and, if infested debris is moved from one area to another, the insects are moved as well. Further spread of the infestation may not be known for at least another year.

Like other thrips infestations, the damage is obvious. The thrips use their “rasps” to destroy developing plant tissue and suck the life juices from the plant. This results in leaves, buds and fruits that may turn bronze in color. Additionally, leaves may curl and become distorted. Infested plants may become stunted, drop buds and lose leaves.

Control of the *chilli thrips* is not difficult, but does require persistent treatment. There are some chemicals available that are effective, but they must be applied at the right time to be effective. Dr. Ludwig is working as one of the lead researchers to develop IPM (integrated pest management) techniques that will aid in arresting the spread of this insect.

For more information and help in identifying the *chilli thrips*, please see www.chillithrips.tamu.edu.

Thanks to Texas Gardener’s Seed for this information.

Who's Volunteering and Where?

Nacogdoches County Master Gardeners are all about volunteerism. Our members are constantly on alert for opportunities to educate and beautify our community.

Recently Gerry Peacock and Tom Shone made a presentation to the Old South Garden Club at their monthly meeting. And in November, Bill and Lynn Teague will be speaking to the Four Seasons Garden Club.

Jo Anne Carter and Mike Hasley have taken on the installation of the big Demonstration Garden sign. And Jo Anne has also organized everything for the Master Gardener's booth at the Pineywoods Fair. Many of the members have assisted in manning the booth.

A big thanks to Duane Horne for creating the brochure on 'Planting Your Own Blueberry Bushes'. Duane took the materials we used at the 2008 Blueberry Festival booth and compiled a colorful and educational brochure. We hope to be able to use the brochures at the 2009 festival. Thanks Duane!



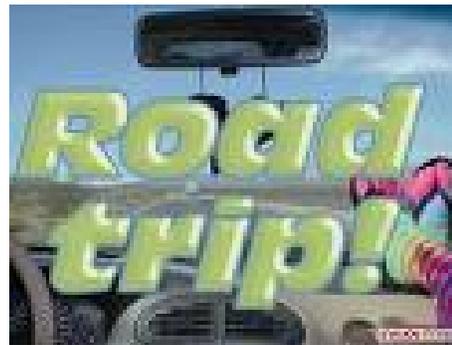
Upcoming volunteer opportunities:

October 13th – Millard's Crossing help install a drip irrigation system – call Tom Shone for details.

December or January – watch for details on harvesting blueberry sprouts at Hayter Farms. Chad will have more details later.

Harvesting daylily and narcissus bulbs – Gerry Peacock will have more details later.

Nacogdoches County courthouse needs some help with their flower beds. Please contact Chad Gulley for more details.



On The Road Again

A full day field trip is planned for Friday, October 17th. The group will be touring Trees USA in Lindale; lunching in the Tyler area; and then finishing with a tour of the Idea Garden, the demonstration garden of the Smith County Master Gardeners. Please meet at the Wal-Mart parking lot at 8 a.m. and we will carpool to Lindale and Tyler. For more information, please contact Chad Gulley at the CEO.



Officer Nominations

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers at the October monthly meeting:

President – Jo Anne Carter
Vice Pres. – Sylvia St. Andry
Secretary – Penny Horne
Treasurer – Lynn Teague
Immediate P.P. – Gerry Peacock

According to the bylaws, election by secret ballot will be at the November meeting and the installation of the new officers is at the December meeting.

Thanks to the Nominating Committee Dorothy Shone, Sylvia St. Andry and Bill Teague, chairman, for presenting the slate.

From the Editor

There are two topics I'd like to share with you in this issue. First, have you ever thought of growing your own salad? Even without the luxury of a green house, you can have fresh salad greens all winter long.

Here's the trick! Start with suitable containers, such as leftover black vinyl pots (1 – 5 gal. are best). The size makes them easy to move and the black vinyl helps keep the soil warm and the plants grow. Using a good quality potting soil, add a generous amount of rotted manure (premixed potting soil containing slow release fertilizer is a good alternative) and fill the pots with the mix. Place the containers in a tray full of water and allow them to soak up water until they are saturated. Next, plant your seeds just as you would in the garden. Place the containers, still in the trays, in a warm, sunny spot. Keep them well watered using the tray method or drip irrigation. These methods will reduce the chance of washing the seeds out of the pots. As your salad starts to grow, be sure to thin out the plants to avoid overcrowding.

A wide variety of lettuces will do well using this technique. Lettuce, spinach, Romaine, red leaf lettuce, endive, arugula, other leaf lettuces and even radishes are suitable for these containers. And most salad greens do best when harvested while slightly immature. You can be a bit creative and arrange your plants so that your portable gardens look like table top arrangements.

Even as winter approaches, just cover the containers with a blanket or bring them indoors if the temps are predicted below 25°.

(Thanks to Texas Gardener's Seed for this information.)

The second tidbits I want to pass along are several websites for you to peruse. Listed below are websites of other Master Gardener Clubs. They are fun to check out and we can always learn something new from another Master Gardener. So start surfing!!!!

Smith County Master Gardeners

www.scmg.tamu.edu

Shreveport Master Gardeners

www.nwlamg.org

Texas Master Gardeners

www.texasmastergardeners.com

Master Gardeners at A & M

www.mastergardeners.tamu.edu

Harris County Master Gardeners

www.hcmga.tamu.edu

Here's hoping your garden is growing nicely and that we see you around some of the Master Gardener events/activities in the months to come.

Lynn Teague

Editor

Email: blt@hal-pc.org

Phone: (936) 559-9007



