



<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

**February 2018**

<http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/>

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**SCMG Association Meeting**  
**February 1st**  
**at 11:30 AM**  
**at the Rose Garden Center**

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## SCMG Association Meeting

**February 1st 11:30 AM**  
**at the Rose Garden Center**

Is there a more perfect time of year, than February to have someone come and talk to us about Roses?

The speaker for our next monthly meeting will be Mark Chamblee, owner of Chamblee's Rose Nursery. His topic is "Addressing Rose Rosette Disease Concerns When Incorporating Roses In The Landscape".



Also looking ahead, the Spring Awards Luncheon in April has been changed to Wednesday April 11 at 11:30 at the Rose Garden Center, due to members attending the Texas Master Gardeners Conference on our regular meeting date.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting.

*Janie Fowler*

## Volunteer Hours Reports

Last chance to send your 2017 hours reports to Pat Welch! File your report by February 2nd. Those who do not do this, jeopardize their certification.

We will be using the Volunteer Management System during 2018 for our reports. For those who have not already signed up, go to page 2 of this newsletter for instructions. Sign up now and begin reporting your January 2018 hours using that system..

*Pat Welch*

## Wayne's Word



We are off and running. We have 21 folks in the new class that started on January 4<sup>th</sup>. They are excited and working hard in the class.

Before I go further I want to thank those that served last year, especially Susan Stone. The work she and her team did was always selfless and professional. I want to thank those that have stepped forward to serve the SCMG's in 2018.

Yes 2018! If you haven't noticed the days are getting longer and that is good for the plants as we enter our spring in East Texas. Hopefully our winter and cold weather is finished. We do not need more cold like we had to open January 2018. As I wrote this the previous last week, it is now SNOWING! East Texas weather. It is now expected to be above normal for a few days.

Lots of activity and work going on. The gardens need to be cleaned for spring planting, the Library Series is ongoing with the first one successfully completed, the Home Garden Tour committee under the capable leadership of Linda Munn and her team is going full speed. The team viewed many gardens and have chosen 5 at this time. The call for volunteers will be going out next month. This is our major spring project and will require many hands to make it a success. Please volunteer when called.

We also have the Spring Market at the Goodman House coming up in late March. Our focus this year will be in the educational arena.

**Wayne's Word— continued on Page 3**

## Singing the Blues

By Greg Grant

It's time for everybody to get their bluebird boxes and other bird houses cleaned out and repaired. The general rule is to have this done before Valentine's Day each year. With the lengthening, warmer days and love in the air, bluebirds are now actively searching for nesting cavities, both natural and manmade. Bluebirds are considered secondary cavity dwellers, because they can't excavate their own nesting cavities and originally nested in abandoned woodpecker holes in dead trees.

Bluebird nest boxes should have entrance holes that are exactly 1 ½ inches wide and should be placed about head high in open spaces like lawns, meadows, cemeteries, golf courses, and pastures. Those placed in wooded areas generally attract Carolina chickadees, titmice, and flying squirrels. I don't recommend any nesting box that can't be opened easily for cleaning. Cheap boxes often have no way to clean them out. Although there are nest boxes that open from the front and from the side, I prefer the ones that I make that open from the top so as not to disturb the nesting birds.

Bluebirds can nest up to three times in a year and need the old nests removed after the young fledge each time as Mrs. Bluebird prefers a clean house. Bluebirds are considered the "songbird" of happiness and are year round residents in East Texas, feeding on small berries during the winter and insects and berries during the warm season. They do not eat bird seed. To encourage bluebirds on your property, limit pesticide use, provide bird baths during the summer, keep dead trees standing for woodpeckers when safe, and leave as many native berry producing plants like sumac, Possumhaw holly, pokeberry, Virginia creeper, and dogwood as possible. I myself have around 100 nest boxes.

I'm also a lifetime member of the Texas Bluebird Society. For more information on bluebirds visit [texasbluebirdsociety.org](http://texasbluebirdsociety.org). They also have good deals on nice nest boxes combined with a membership and host several public meeting throughout the year. There are three different species of bluebirds in Texas, but the only one in East Texas is the Eastern bluebird, one of my all time favorite birds.




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## VMS Update

Thank you to the 48 MG's who have joined the volunteer management system and begun reporting their hours on the site. We need everyone to sign in to use the system so we can begin sending MG emails from here. The system is very easy to use and once you enter hours, you are done. No need to turn anything in at the end of the month. For those who have not signed up yet, here is a quick tutorial.

- 1) Go to [texas.volunteersystem.org](http://texas.volunteersystem.org)
- 2) Click on new user?/password problems? Enter your password and receive email to access portal.
- 3) Check your email for one from Jayla Fry. It will have a temporary password.
- 4) Go back to [texas.volunteersystem.org](http://texas.volunteersystem.org), enter your email and the temporary password. Login
- 5) You should be at the MG home page
- 6) On the left there is an Edit Your Profile link. Click on it and fill out the information
- 7) Change your password here to something you will remember. You need it every time you sign into the system
- 8) Click on SAVE INFORMATION at the bottom and you are in the system.

### PART TWO of VMS

On the left side of the page, there is an ADD NEW HOURS link.

- 1) Event Description - what you did at event
- 2) Enter event date
- 3) Pull down menu to assign it to a project.
- 4) Enter your volunteer hours and CE's if there are any
- 5) Scroll to the bottom and SAVE HOURS
- 6) DONE!!!!

Please look around the site. You can find the Grapevine and Smith County Extension News under the Newsletter/Document tab.

Also under this Document tab is Upcoming Events where information for workshops, etc. will be located. There is a General Events Calendar where all things MG should be listed. If you have a meeting or event planned and want it listed here. E-mail Jean Smith the information. [smithjean17@hotmail.com](mailto:smithjean17@hotmail.com)

Call, text, e-mail Jean Smith with any questions or concerns. 903-316-8501

*Jean Smith*

### Wayne's Word continued from page 1

Last year's projects and submissions for TMG Awards have been submitted and they look great. Our project of the year is "From Bulbs to Blooms" and should fare well in the competition. East Texas State Fair, AgriWorld, project won its competition with other state fairs in Texas. The Secret Garden is a big part of the AgriWorld exhibit. Thanks to Susan and everyone that contributed to that effort.

The intern volunteer hour requirements have changed and we will be needing mentors to transition the interns into SCMG. There will be more on the hour requirements later.

Spring is just around the corner and I know that as gardeners we anticipate that more than most. But with it comes the work in your personal garden and in the gardens we sponsor at the Rose Garden we all need to get ready for spring. So get energized and ready to do your thing.

One last note. If you did not see the AgriHood display at AgriWorld last fall you can stop by the Tyler Public Library and see it in the lobby. Charlie and Monette Colman built it, with help from Victor and Shirley Long, and it a fantastic option.

*Wayne Elliott, President*

### 2018 Master Gardener Class Schedule For February 2018

**February 1:** East Texas Turfgrass Conference, Multiple speakers. **Overton.** 8:00 am-4:00 pm

February 8: *Perennials/Annuals/Bulbs/Propagation* (w/Dr. Brent Pemberton). Extension Office 9:00 am—4:00 pm

**February 15:** Erfan Vafaie, Extension Program Specialist, *IPM - Insect Identification & Control.* **Overton** at the Research and Extension Center. 1:00 pm-5:00 pm

**February 22:** Special Program - Dr. Joe Masabni - Extension Vegetable Specialist – *Home Vegetable Production.* **Overton.** 1:00 pm-5:00 pm

Classes will be in Room 116A at the Extension Office, unless they are held at **Overton**, as noted.

The complete schedule is posted on the SCMG website, on the Members page.

### New Picture for the Directory?

If you want to update your picture in the Membership Directory, come to the MG Office between noon and 1 PM on February 8th. The new class is having their pictures taken that day and we'll work you in.

*Martin Davis*

### MG Members: It is That Time!

We have an interesting and enthusiastic group of interns this year: 21 eager-to-learn folks! They will be moving from "book learning" to hands on, in the dirt, "is-that-really-a-weed?" by April. They each will need the support of an MG Mentor. This is someone who agrees to be a resource, an instant friend in our group; someone who will keep in touch with the intern, who will introduce him or her at meetings or work days; someone who cares whether they attend programs and someone who makes them feel welcome.

We have all been "newbies". We know how good it was to have someone who showed us the ropes, sat with us at meetings, and encouraged us to stay with the program. It is your turn now to be that someone for another newbie.

Please contact Susan Nelson, [snelson300@gmail.com](mailto:snelson300@gmail.com) or 903-253-2244 if you be part of the 21 mentors needed. We will do our best to match you with an intern of similar interests. We would like to have interns/MGs paired by March, so please act now and let me hear from you!!

The Board of Directors met on January 19, 2018. The following action items were discussed:



TMGA Awards for 2017 have been submitted.

The first lecture for Master Gardeners at the Library was a success with 62 people in attendance.

VMS sign-up is going well. To date, 48 MGs have logged volunteer hours in the new system.

Spring Flower Market at Goodman Museum might be better handled as an educational event rather than sale.

Five home gardens have been confirmed for the Home Garden Tour.

87 MGs have paid dues so far for 2018.

The AgriHood diorama is currently on display at the Tyler Public Library.

### TX Director's Meeting, December 2, 2017

Jean Smith attended this meeting and reports:

Online training modules will become available soon. Details of their use and cost were discussed.

New MG Training Handbook available by April. It will include color photos, new binding, new content, electronic options, etc.

The 2018 TX State Conference April 4-6 details were discussed. 2019 Conference will be in Victoria April 25-27, 2019. 2020 Conference will be in Waco, May 14-16, 2020.

MGs have raised \$147,228 for the EarthKind Garden at The Gardens at Texas A&M

## Looking Ahead...

### Master Gardeners at the Library

At Tyler's Public Library. Free and open to the public.

Each lecture begins at 11:30 AM.

February 9—Greg Grant, *Texas Tough! History of Texas Superstar Plant Program*

March 9—Wayne Elliott, *Raised Bed Gardening on a Hillside*

### EARTHKIND SPECIALIST TRAINING

Date: February 19 and 20, 2018

The Bastrop County Master Gardeners are pleased to host the Master Gardener Earth-Kind Specialist training program. **Course Fee: \$225. Registration on:**

Registration deadline for the course will be February 9.

For more information on these and other events, go to:

<https://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>

### E. Texas Fruit and Vegetable Conference - South

Friday, February 23, 2018 Pitser Garrison Convention Center ■ 601 North 2nd Street ■ Lufkin, TX

Register with payment by February 16 \$30 per person \$10.00 late fee after February 16. Make checks payable to ETFVC-South And mail to: TX A&M AgriLife Extension Service Angelina Horticulture Com. 2201 South Medford Dr. Lufkin, TX 75901

### Bluebird Season Kickoff

The [Bluebird Season Kickoff](#) moves to the 4th Saturday in February the 24th. Go to [Registration](#) for details.

The event will be in Bryan at the Brazos County Expo Center.

### Landscape Design School Series XXV, Course IV February 26-27, 2018

The George Bush Presidential Library at Texas A & M University will be the site of Landscape Design School IV, February 26-27, 2018. For more info, go to:

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/>



2018 Officers



Class XXV



This is Coral Bark Maple.  
Only color in January.  
Wayne Elliot