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**SCMG Association Meeting  
11:30 AM January 2nd  
at the Rose Garden Center**

**MG Grapevine Staff**

Martin Davis, Editor

**MG Grapevine Contributors:**

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HAPPY NEW YEAR and Adios! My farewell is bittersweet as I relinquish the title of President and become the Parliamentarian. It is hard to believe that I am going into the last phase of a three year commitment. The last two years have flown by because of the great people like all of you in our Smith County Master Gardener Association.

I would like to thank the members of the Board, Project Leaders and Coordinators, and the many volunteers throughout the year for making this a successful year from my standpoint. Looking back, we had a wonderful Home Garden Tour highlighting five beautiful gardens along with gracious host, a

new challenge with "Our Secret Garden" exhibit at the East Texas State Fair being changed from AgriWorld to Discovery Texas taking on a new format with successful results, and our ever popular "From Bulbs to Blooms" Bulb Sale and Conference bringing people from all over to make it a success. Be sure to buy your copy of the 2020 Calendar before they are all gone. Sherri and committee did a beautiful job with picture selection and articles about Shade Gardens though out the calendar. Again, a huge "THANK YOU" to all those members who made this happen.

Next year as most of you are aware, we are replacing our annual Home Garden Tour with the Garden Tour and Conference at the newly named Tyler Botanical Garden and Rose Garden Center. The Tour and events for the gardens will be free to the public, but there will be a charge for the afternoon Conference held in the Rose Garden Center building. The committee for this event have been working diligently on the plans for months under the leadership of Steve Farrell.

Hope to see all of you at the January Membership Meeting for the Installation of Officers for the year 2020. Henry Burch will be collecting dues for the 2020 year as long as those members paying are members in good standing with the association. To qualify as a member in good standing those members must have all required Volunteer and Continuing Education Hours entered into the Volunteer Management System (VMS) or have made arrangements through either Debby Watkins or myself so that a solution can be worked out that will allow you to continue in the association. Jean Smith will present a refresher course on VMS and an opportunity for those members having difficulty with either how to enter hours or where to enter Volunteer Hours or CE's to gain a better understanding of the system.

Many great memories in 2019 and I look forward to working with all of you in the future!!  
- Janie Fowler President

**January 2020 Association Meeting**



Come in out of the cold and join us for the January monthly meeting on Thursday, January 2, at the Rose Garden Center at 11:30 AM. Greg will do the installation of the new officers on the Board of Directors. Then Janie Fowler will reflect back upon the association in 2019, Debby Watkins will look forward into 2020, and Mary Jo Madden will introduce the VMS Incentive Program. After that, Jean Smith, will give us a refresher on VMS. Hope to see you there!

*Debby Watkins*

### 2019 Smith County Master Gardeners, In-Depth Summary

Greg Grant, CEA-Horticulture, Smith County

**Relevance:** The population of Smith County continues to increase yearly, with an influx of new residents and new businesses, and is currently at 209,714 (2010 US Census Data). The Smith County Master Gardener program is a source of volunteers who provide assistance in conducting horticulture related programs. Master Gardeners, as well as other Extension volunteers, must be adequately trained and provided motivation and ongoing support for the volunteer effort to realize optimal effectiveness.

**Response:** Adult volunteers were trained in horticulture and environmental-related subject matter to increase their knowledge of horticulture with research-based information to develop a group of volunteers to assist the horticulture agent in planning, implementing, and evaluating gardening programs in Smith County. The goal is to train new volunteers each year while maintaining the certification of the 150 active volunteers currently in the program in providing horticultural programs to the clientele of Smith County. There were 18 people in the 2019 class.

- SCMGGA meetings (monthly, Jan-Dec)
- SCMGGA Grapevine newsletter (monthly, Jan-Dec)
- Garden columns in each Sunday Tyler Morning Telegraph (weekly, Jan-Dec)
- Master Gardener training course (once a week Jan through April 2019) over 70 hours course work
- Home Garden Tour (May 2019). Att: 778.
- First Tuesday in the Garden Lecture (monthly, fall). Att: 525
- Workday in the demonstration gardens (each Tuesday and Wednesday, weekly)
- Established the SCMG Help Desk
- Discovery Texas Secret Garden (Sept 23-Sept 27, 2019) 1057 youth attending.
- Bulbs to Blooms Conference and Sale. Att: 442, netting \$16,860 (Oct 12, 2019)
- Facebook page (6902 followers)
- Published 2019 garden calendar. Sold out.
- Master Gardener orientation meeting (Nov 22, 2019). Att: 23
- Christmas luncheon for SCMGGA members, extension staff, city council, county commissioners, and judge (Dec 5, 2019)
- TARGET School Garden (monthly)
- Master Gardeners at the Library. Att: 1125

#### Overview of the Smith County Master Gardener program:

- 12,989 hours of volunteer time (through Nov), multiplied by \$25.10 (2019 Independent Sector Value of Volunteers in Texas) = \$326,023.90.
- 6902 Facebook followers with daily posts.
- As of Nov, 2531 continuing educational hours
- Awards from the 2019 State Master Gardener Conference for the 2018 year: 1<sup>st</sup> Place Project: Agriworld, 1<sup>st</sup> Place Research: East Texas Ornamental Trials, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Individual: Susan Stone, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Education: Texas Superstar Advanced Training, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Association: Smith County Master Gardeners' Association.

The Smith County Master Gardeners Association Executive Board determined that First Tuesdays in the Garden, home garden tour, Help Desk, speakers bureau, school garden at Caldwell Elementary, Tyler Botanical Garden, Master Gardeners at the Library, Discovery Texas at the East Texas State Fair, Bulbs to Blooms conference and sale, and a garden calendar be implemented to enhance the publics' knowledge on the benefits of Earth-Kind gardening, environmental awareness, community beautification, and healthier living. 3,547 educational contacts in 2019..

**Smith County Master Gardeners at the Library Landscape Design Lecture:** 98 of 129 (76%) of participants responded providing data back on their perception of knowledge gained and plans to adopt new landscaping practices based on the educational program.

#### Intention to adopt: (excludes already adopted)

- 58 of 79 (73%) plan to add more plants to their landscape
- 55 of 76 (72%) plan to decrease water use in their landscape
- 50 of 81 (62%) plan to redesign their landscape

**Economic Impact:** 71 of 98 (72.4%) of participants estimated a total economic impact of **\$22,024** as a direct result of the educational program.

**Continued on page 3**

## 2019 Smith County Master Gardener Training Class Knowledge Gained

Continued from page 2

Statement	Before	After	Change	% Change
Soil, Water, Composting, and Fertilizer	1.625	3.213	1.588	98%
Botany, Plant Growth and Development	1.625	3.213	1.588	98%
Home Fruit & Nut Production	1.813	3.563	1.75	97%
Vegetable & Herb Production	1.813	3.563	1.75	97%
Lawn Care	1.688	3.310	1.622	96%
Landscape Horticulture	1.675	3.263	1.588	95%
Environmental Horticulture	1.675	3.213	1.538	92%
Diagnosing & Managing Plant Diseases	1.813	3.463	1.650	91%

**Adoption of Practices, Knowledge Gain, and Economic Impact:**

- 18 of 18 (100%) of the 2019 Master Gardener training class responded that their knowledge of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service was increased as a direct result of this educational program.
- 17 of 18 (94%) of Master Gardener trainees responded to the survey regarding adoption of practices presented during the 2019 Smith County Master Gardener training class. These practices include landscape design, use of mulches, selection of plants based on water conservation, decreasing pesticide and fertilizer use, more proper irrigation use efficiency, landscaping for increased water use efficiency and recycling yard waste. Training class participants indicated that by adoption of these practices, they would expect an economic savings estimated at **\$424.95** per participant or **\$7224.15** total savings for the training class.

Total economic impact for the 2019 Smith County Master Gardener volunteer hours, Smith County Master Gardener training class, and the Smith County Master Gardener at the Library Lecture educational programs can be positively determined to be **\$355,272.05** as a direct result of these educational programs and volunteer time.

**Acknowledgements:** Special thanks to the following for assistance and support to the Smith County Master Gardener program: Smith County Master Gardeners' Association, Clint Perkins, Dr. Joe Masabni, Erfan Vafaie, Keith Hansen, Debby Watkins, Dr. Kevin Ong, Dr. Brent Pemberton, Mary Wilhite/Blue Moon Gardens, Breedlove Nursery, Daniel Duncum/Texas A&M Forest Service, SFA Gardens, Dr. Dave Creech, Rozell Sprayer Company, Kluber Lubrication, Texas A&M Research and Extension Center at Overton, Dr. Jerry Parsons, Metro Maples, the City of Tyler, Southern Living, Creative Home and Garden, Seville Farms, East Texas State Fair, the Tyler Rose Garden, and the entire Smith County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension support staff.

**The SCMG Help Desk is One Year Old!**

The newly designed SCMG Help Desk will turn 1 year old in January 2020! It's been a good year...we've learned a lot, helped a lot of people, and made improvements to the process along the way. We've learned that a lot of the same questions are asked over and over (those answers are easy). We've learned that some people don't like the answers we give and want Greg to give them a different answer (he doesn't, usually). And we've learned that sometimes we have to send people to a specialist (arborist, entomologist, disease lab). But most importantly, we help the gardening public and educate ourselves in the process.

As you know, spring is gardening's busy season and consequently, the Help Desk's busy season. We need help. We'll have new training sessions starting in late January.....watch for announcements in the weekly Email Blast. And, as always, one-on-one training can be arranged. Please consider joining the Help Desk team. Three-hour shifts are scheduled Monday through Friday beginning at 9 am and then 1 pm. You can check out the Help Desk schedule in the Monthly Calendar at the end of the Grapevine and if you want to sign-up, please contact us at [SmithMGHelpDesk@gmail.com](mailto:SmithMGHelpDesk@gmail.com). All scheduling must be done through the Help Desk, not through the AgriLife office staff. *Susan Stone*

**New "Master Gardeners at the Library" Series to Begin January 17**

Our award winning lecture series, "Master Gardeners at the Library" is back for its 4<sup>th</sup> season beginning Friday, January 17, 2020 at 11:30 am in the Library's Taylor Auditorium, 201 S. College Ave. Free overflow parking is available in the Fair Plaza parking garage across the street from the Library. Speakers, topics and dates for 2020 include:

**January 17,** "Pines, Pawpaws and Pocket Prairies – Developing and Maintaining an Ecosystem for Birds and Butterflies," with Greg Grant, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Horticulture Agent for Smith County.

Complete schedule available on the SCMG website at <https://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>





Annual Membership dues of \$20 will be collected at the January 2<sup>nd</sup> Membership Meeting. Henry Burch and Terri Gerber will be collecting dues payments before and immediately after the meeting. Checks or exact cash would be appreciated. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can also mail a check (not cash) to: Treasurer, Smith County Master Gardener Assn., 1517 W. Front Street, #116, Tyler, TX 75702

If you are not current with your 2019 mandatory volunteer and continuing education hour requirements, the Treasurer will not be able to accept payment of your 2020 annual dues. Before the meeting, please discuss with Janie Fowler or Debby Watkins so that a solution can be worked out that will allow you to continue as a member in good standing.

### New Document Retention Policy is Online

It's 2020 and SCMG now using a cloud service (One-Drive) to archive and manage important association documents. No more wondering who has the last version of that document you need to update or use. Our new policy, no. 1012 "Document Retention", explains how the process works and is available for review on the SCMG Website and VMS. Our goal is to have a central repository (One-Drive) for storing original documentation such as Bylaws, Policies & Procedures, Job Descriptions, etc., as well as documents that can be edited and re-purposed for yearly projects. No more storing important SCMG documents on home computers (many times never to be seen again).

One-Drive is managed by the Help Desk administrator on the SCMG office PC. The administrator will have responsibility for uploading and downloading files for members' use. If you need a document to update, or if you have documents that need to be stored, contact the Help Desk via email at [smithmghelpdesk@gmail.com](mailto:smithmghelpdesk@gmail.com).

### REGISTRATION COMING SOON!

Registration for the **2020 Texas Master Gardener Conference** will open first thing in the New Year. The earlybird rate of \$225.00 will run until **January 20, 2020**. Please take time now to preview the sessions, workshops and tours available by perusing the website at [txmg.org/conference](http://txmg.org/conference).

### 2020 Class Schedule – 9-4 each Thursday—Cotton Belt Bldg., Tyler, TX Class 27

**January 2:** Welcome. Water/Soils/Fertility/Composting (Clint Perkins). Classroom.

**January 9:** Orientation/MG Projects (Greg Grant, a.m.)-Botany (Keith Hansen, p.m.). Classroom.

**January 16:** Gardening for the Birds and the Bees (Greg Grant, a.m.)-Entomology (Erfan Vafaie, p.m.). Classroom. **Multi-county chair set up.**

**January 23:** Vegetables (Dr. Joe Masabni a.m.). Seed Saving 101/In Greg's Garden (Greg Grant, p.m.)- Classroom. **Multi-county chair set up.**

**January 30:** Propagation (Debby Watkins, a.m.). Annuals/Trials/Texas Superstars (Brent Pemberton, p.m.). Classroom.

**February 6:** Arboriculture (Daniel Duncum, a.m.). Fruits and Nuts (Greg Grant, p.m.). Classroom.

**February 13:** Landscape Plants (Greg Grant, a.m.). Earth-Kind Roses, Rose Rosette (Greg Grant, p.m.). Classroom.

**February 20:** Turfgrass/Weeds (Greg Grant, a.m.). SCMG Words of Wisdom, etc. (p.m.). Classroom.

**February 27:** Plant Pathology (Dr. Kevin Ong). Classroom. **Multi-county chair set up.**

**March 5:** Bulbs (Greg Grant, a.m.). Perennials (Greg Grant, p.m.). Classroom.

**March 12:** SCMG Words of Wisdom, Garden Reports, Help Desk, etc. Classroom.

**March 19:** Carpool trip to Blue Moon Gardens (Edom), Rozell Sprayers, and Breedlove Nursery.

**March 26:** Carpool trip to SFA Gardens, Mast Arboretum, and Ruby Mize Azalea Garden.

**April 2:** Graduation/Awards Luncheon, Tyler Rose Garden Center.

