



<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

Vol. XXVII No. 2

February 2020



Debby's Digressions—Thank y'all for your faith in electing me president of this wonderful association. I'm absolutely terrified but will give you my best. My goal as VP in 2019 was to provide quality educational programs for our members, particularly at the monthly meetings as I really believe in the MG mission of education. For 2020, I want to continue to focus on education. Our new VP Mary Jo Madden will be handling getting speakers for the monthly meetings and she has some great ideas. We'd like to have another bus trip or a workshop for the members and she will need some help with that. Educational outreach to the community is really important and I want to try to expand on that. Our well attended Library Lecture Series continues this month. Our Garden Celebration and Conference on June 6 has all the makings of an

**SCMG Association Meeting
11:30 AM February 6th
at the Rose Garden Center**

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Published for the Master Gardeners of Smith County, Texas under the auspices of the Smith County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, 1517 W. Front St. Tyler, TX 75702.

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educational blowout community event. Following that we have the East TX State Fair in September and our Bulbs to Blooms in October. We are being noticed for the quality of our educational programs and have been asked to provide some others. The first one is the 13th Annual Artisan and Flower Market at the Goodman Museum on April 3 and 4. We have been asked to provide some presenters for this. Deanna Olson has agreed to coordinate this event and liaison with the city and provide the presenters. The time slots are only for 30 minutes and can be on a wide variety of topics. The presentations could be speakers, doing a demonstration, or leading a hands-on activity. Basically, whatever your passion is could be a presentation. If you could spend a little time talking about something related to gardening and/or nature, etc., Deanna would love to hear from you. Partly because of the success of our Library Lecture Series, the Tyler Library has asked if we could do a summer program for children at the library. We need a coordinator to liaison with the library and recruit some presenters. Thus far we have one MG that could do a presentation, but we need a coordinator. If this is something that interests you please let me know. All these educational outreach programs that I have mentioned do not require physical activity like working in the gardens so they are a great opportunity for you to get your volunteer hours.

Life is ever changing and we have some changes with coordinators of some of our programs and projects. Sherri Matthews has done an outstanding job with the calendar but has serious health issues and cannot do it any longer. So, we need someone to step up to coordinate the 2020 Calendar/Garden Guide or we will not have one this year. Scherel Carver is willing to co-coordinate with someone. So, if you have any ideas or want to take on this project, please let me know. There's one more position that needs filled immediately. Susan Stone wears many hats and she is giving up one. She is not going to be the Speakers Bureau coordinator. She will be moving and is starting to give up some of her responsibilities. The Speakers Bureau coordinator has three primary responsibilities. The first is to be the contact person for any group that contacts us and would like a speaker. The second is coordinating the Library Lecture Series in the spring and thirdly, the First Tuesday in the Garden in the fall. There is a Programming Committee that gives support and **DIGRESSIONS > Page 3**



February 2020 Association Meeting

The February monthly meeting will be on Thursday, February 6, 2020, at the Rose Garden Center at 11:30 AM. Please plan to come and enjoy a program titled "Dairy to Prairie" from our speaker, Julie Mattox. While operating her own surveying consulting firm, Julie had the opportunity to explore various ecosystems throughout the US. Working alongside professionals such as paleontologists, archaeologists, biologists and botanists, many of whom were grassland specialists, Julie developed a passion for the prairie ecosystem.

She and her husband relocated to Northeast Texas in 1996. Fourteen years later, she had the chance to purchase a dairy surrounding their original property, and the prairie restoration began. From dairy to prairie is no easy task. With many challenges along the way, she is open to sharing her full experience and passion for restoring the tallgrass prairie. *Mary Jo Madden*



Rose Tour Volunteers Needed

Calling all volunteers: We are in need of small but dedicated group to help give Rose Garden tours when different groups visit Tyler. The City of Tyler and Visit Tyler have been very good to the Smith County Master Gardeners so we'd like to help them out with this tourism aspect. Now that we have our own Tyler Botanical Garden we will have tour requests for it too (or both) I'm sure. Most groups that tour the rose garden aren't even gardeners and rarely ask technical horticulture questions. Most just want to be outside and enjoy nature's beauty. If you are willing to help with this, contact Susan Buntz or Paul Wick who will be heading up this endeavor. I will provide training and info to help you out. It's really pretty easy. My rule about tours is to talk about whatever you know about and show them what you like and are familiar with. We do need to provide basic information about the history of the garden which I normally do

standing on the patio overlooking the garden.

The land that became the world famous Tyler Rose Garden was purchased in 1912 with the intention of constructing a new park and fairgrounds. After years of inactivity, the president of the American Rose Society urged the city to apply to the federal Works Project Administration (WPA) to fund the construction of a municipal rose garden on the site. The WPA agreed to the request and awarded an \$181,255 grant to the City of Tyler to construct a stone picnic pavilion, balcony, stairs, and other garden features. It is considered the largest municipal park and garden project approved by the WPA. It is also considered the largest municipal rose garden in the U.S. Architect Keith Maxwell (also with the WPA) drew up the initial plans for the garden, but later, they were revised by local nurseryman Henry Thompson (of Thomson Hills Nursery fame) who laid out the existing beds and walkways. Thompson was killed in World War II, and the garden was later dedicated to his memory. The Tyler Municipal Rose Garden was officially opened in 1952 with the original 3,000 rose bushes donated by local nurseries as a "living catalogue" of their inventory. The garden is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Although there isn't much rose production in Tyler anymore, there's still a rose processing industry. And since we are "the Rose City" we need to do all we can to educate about our history, industry, garden, and rose cultivation. -Greg



2020 Tyler Botanical Garden Celebration and Conference

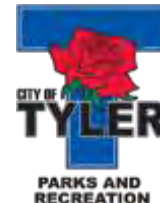
We now have a committee of 17 members aggressively planning the gala event. Tyler Parks and Recreation and Visit Tyler are working with us to promote both the Celebration and Conference. A Sponsor Committee has begun fund raising to subsidize the cost of the event.

A flyer will be circulated soon announcing the Celebration to begin at 8am with morning yoga and garden tours beginning from 9am and ending at 3pm. There will be demonstrations, live music, a "kids' zone", food trucks, and ice cream in the garden by Dairy Queen.

The Garden Conference will be 1pm to 4pm and featured speakers are Dr. David Creech, Steven Chamblee, and our own Greg Grant. There will be a minimal charge to attend the conference.

We envision 800+ attendees for the Celebration and 400+ attendees to the Conference. We need every Smith County Master Gardener to support this event. Sign up sheets will be available at the March monthly meeting.

Steve Farrell



Help Desk Training Scheduled

A new session of Help Desk training is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 12 from 1 to 3 pm in room 116 (classroom) at the AgriLife office. If you'd like to work the Help Desk or just need a refresher, this session will help you get started. Spring is around the corner and the first questions about turf grasses are already coming in. We'll go over Help Desk basics and Greg will talk about turf and weeds and anything else you might want to know. We also plan to talk about Google Lens...an easy way to identify plants, weeds, insects and even dogs.

Remember, you must attend training prior to working the Help Desk and one-on-one training can be arranged if need be. So plan to join us and see what it's all about. Questions? Send an email to SmithMGHelpDesk@gmail.com or call Susan Stone at 903-952-7506. Susan Stone



Homeowners & Master Gardeners

E.T. Turfgrass Conference

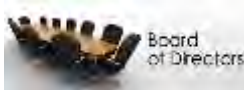
February 4, 2020

8:00 AM—4:00PM

Held at Texas A&M Research & Extension Center, Overton, TX

Registration begins at 8 AM on site
\$35 registration fee

The Board of Directors met on January 16, 2020. The following items were discussed:



- Insufficient Volunteer/Continuing Education Hours --- an update revealed at the end of 2019, only 9 members were deficient in reporting volunteer and continuing education hours. Those members will be dropped from the 2020 Directory.
- Intern Hours --- The board was informed of a few changes to the Intern Hour requirements for Class 27. The total requirements still remain at 72 hours, but rearranged in certain areas to make obtaining hours easier for the Interns.
- ♦ 2019 TMGA Awards -- Most of the TMGA Awards have been sent to Mary Hamlin for proofing and editing. She is very optimistic that all the entries will be in and submitted in a timely manner.
- ♦ 2020 Trainee Class -- The new class is well underway with 23 new class trainees. The trainees have already been advised of their hour requirements, will meet their Mentors on February 20th along with a Writer's Workshop presentation, and on March 20th will hear "SCMGA Words of Wisdom" from all the project leaders and coordinators.
- ♦ Background Checks --- Every 3 years, background checks must be updated. At this time all but one application has been received.
- ♦ VMS Categories --- A subcommittee will review the current list in VMS and expand the categories to cover all aspects for entering hours.
- ♦ Garden Tour/Conference --- A contract agreement will be drawn up between SCMGA and a graphic designer to create logos, assist in creation of Tyler Botanical Garden web page, etc. The board approved the signature of the President on this contract and all future contracts. *Susan Stone*

Top Stories of 2019 from online Tyler Paper readers

The following story (in part) appeared in the January 1st copy of the *Tyler Morning Telegraph*:

"There were stories that warmed your heart, that told the story of fantastic finishes and honored long-time residents who retired or passed away. There were well-read stories of death, crime, destruction and intense life-or-death and death sentence trials.

These were among the most-read stories by 12.3 million visitors to tylerpaper.com during 2019.

Then there was Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service writer Greg Grant who penned "Crape myrtle's do not need pruning."

In just 11 paragraphs, Grant, the Smith County horticulturist, earned the No. 1 story of the year according to our analytics.

And it wasn't even close. The rose is the national flower, Tyler is the Rose Capital of the World, so there is no shame in our newsroom having a contributing writer take the top spot with a horticulture article."

And the story goes on with more information about other stories, but this is the important part for the gardeners among us and for Gregcongratulations Greg! *Martin Davis*

Changes for Directory

Anne Brown - abrn525@yahoo.com

Betty Atchley, batchley123@icloud.com,

(903) 574-7578

Nan Bateman, 637 Prestonwood Cir, 75703

nan.bateman55@gmail.com

Terri Gerber, 5620 Cedar Hill Cir., 75703,

903-504-6337 TLGerber@suddenlink.net

Elizabeth Wiley, 2294 St. Hwy. 110 North, Tyler, 75704

If you have a change and have not reported it to Martin Davis, do so at once.

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helps provide ideas so you're not doing this totally on your own. The Spring Library Series is set but we need someone to step up so we can have a fall First Tuesday in the Garden. Greg has already volunteered to do a program for that.

The Trainee Class started on January 2, 2020, with 23 attendees. Last year, for the first time since I came here from Montgomery County, we did a SCMG Words of Wisdom day with the class. It was a jam-packed day of information that left everyone with glazed eyes by the end of the day. But it really seems to have paid off and helped assimilate the 2019 interns into the association as they are doing a bang-up job. This year Greg has given us more time to impart our Words of Wisdom. Instead of just one day, we have two half days and one full day. And remember, sitting in on any of the classes is a great way to get continuing education hours. There are some great topics on the schedule where you can get 3 CEs for the morning and 3 CEs for the afternoon. So, make sure you take advantage of that. Our Mentor Coordinators, Heather Stephens and Tommie Grinnell, are busily working on the Mentor Program. They have reached out to everyone who expressed an interest in being a mentor when they completed the Questionnaire we handed out at the last two meetings.

Lastly, I want to remind you to continue to enter your volunteer hours, continuing education hours, and contacts into VMS. I really wish I could get everyone to realize how important this is! Though, to sweeten the pot for those who enter their hours in a timely manner, the VMS Incentive Program kicked off in January. Everyone who enters at least three hours of either volunteer hours or continuing education hours for the month preceding the monthly membership meeting is automatically entered into a drawing for a gift card to various businesses. Disclaimer: you have to be present at the meeting to win. Hope to see you at the February meeting!

Debby Watkins, President

2020 MASTER GARDENERS AT THE LIBRARY

Tyler Public Library

201 S. College Ave., Tyler, TX 75702

February 21st—11:30 am – 1:00 pm / FREE and open to the public – “Protecting the World One Garden at a Time” – What is YOUR Role and What Can YOU do? with Debby Watkins, Smith County Master Gardener



Registration for the State MG Conference Now Open

Registration for the full conference is \$265.00 for all attendees and includes three full days - May 12 through May 14, 2020. This rate includes attendance to all conference sessions and all meals listed on the Agenda, including the Search for Excellence Awards Banquet on Wednesday, May 13th.

Tours and workshops have additional fees if you elect to take part in any of these offerings.

Take advantage of the **EARLY BIRD RATE** from January 21- February 29, 2020, that rate is \$240.00. From March 1, and until registration closes on April 22, the rate will be the full \$265.00. Don't delay in registering!

For those wishing to come for only one or two days, we are offering that option – **\$80 for a single day attendance or \$160 for a two day attendance**. Please note if you wish to attend the banquet on Wednesday without purchasing the full conference rate, you will need to purchase a separate ticket for the reception and dinner.

For more information go to <https://txmg.org/conference/2020-conference>



For more events and more details - go to—<http://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>

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

- 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.). SCMGA 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:** SCMGA 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.

