



<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

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March 2020



Debby's Digressions—This is YOUR Master Gardener Association and it is YOUR involvement that makes it such a wonderful organization! Kudos and many thanks to all the folks that step up and become involved in our myriad of projects and activities or simply see something that needs to be done and step up to do it without being asked. I encourage those of you who do the minimum that is required to stay certified to look around and get more actively involved. We've got a great bunch of folks and I know you will fill even more personally fulfilled if you get plugged in and do more than the minimum. I'm always open to new ideas and suggestions so reach out to me if you have any.

Winter is flying by and the nice Spring weather is just around the corner. Along with Spring comes our annual April Graduation and Awards Luncheon. The RSVP sheets will be out at the March membership meeting so be thinking about what delicious dish you will be bringing so you can sign up. The current crop of Interns has been very busy fulfilling their requirements and is looking forward to becoming certified Master Gardeners. I've visited the Trainee class numerous times and they are an eager bunch of Master Gardeners-in-Training. They are chomping at the bit already to get out of class and get involved. Our SCM-GA "Words of Wisdom" days are going well with them and they are learning about our association and what the intern requirements are. They've met their Mentors already and are developing bonds with their class members. So, be sure and come to the Luncheon so you can congratulate the newly certified Master Gardeners and welcome the Interns into our fold.

The Garden Celebration and Conference Committee is feverishly working on setting our grand vision into motion on Saturday, June 6, 2020 (with set-up on June 5). It is going to take our whole community of Master Gardeners to pull off this grand jubilee of the Tyler Botanical Garden and the educational Conference. The individual garden coordinators (Heritage Rose Garden, IDEA Garden, and Shade Garden) are handling the signing up of volunteers to be docents within the individual gardens that day. Sign-up sheets for all the other positions associated with the activities that will be going on are going to be available at the March membership meeting. Keep the date open on your calendar as all hands will be needed on deck for this gala!

With the coming of Spring we'll all be getting out to work in our home gardens. At the time that I wrote this article I still had to do the February pruning of my 70+ roses, take care of some pesky winter weeds and cut back dead growth that I had left for the critters over the winter. I know many of you have the same chores to perform. However, please don't forget about our demonstration gardens in the Tyler Botanical Garden. They're going to need lots of extra love and work this Spring to get them ready for our Garden Celebration and Conference. It's a great way to get some exercise, create some beauty, and visit with friends at the same time.

In closing, remember...get involved...it's good for what ails you.

See you in the Garden! *Debby Watkins, President*

**SCMG Association Meeting
11:30 AM March 5th
at the Rose Garden Center**

MG Grapevine Staff

Martin Davis, Editor

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Susan Stone.

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Courts of Texas cooperating.

Extension Office

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March 2020 Association Meeting

Have you been to your local feed store lately? Or Atwood's? Tractor Supply? If you have, then you know that it's **Baby Chick Time** in East Texas! I've been waiting with anticipation for weeks, looking forward to rebuilding my flock after a rough year of dealing with predators.

Jessica Bretz is a transplanted Permian Basin Master Gardener who finds herself needing to build a new chicken coop near Palestine, and she is going to share her experience of **Gardening With Chickens** at our March monthly meeting.

Please join us - maybe you'll get enthused about having chickens too! *Mary Jo Madden*



Grant Guidelines

It's like this every spring, heck almost year round. I always hear some variation of the same comments: "You are hiding from me." "You don't return my calls." "You are never in your office." "I can never find you." "Why are you ignoring me?"

Welcome to the life of a county horticulturist. It's all about time (not enough of it) and numbers (way too high). This is why the Master Gardener program was developed...to help county extension horticulturists and keep them from going cuckoo (OK, more cuckoo in my case).

As you well know, horticulture is more popular than agriculture, 4-H, and family and consumer health, combined. After all, gardening IS the number one hobby in the world. County horticulturists don't have the option of sitting around and waiting for phone calls, planning our day, or plotting programming for the year. Being a county horticulturist is like jumping into a water spout on the ocean with a day planner in your hand. It's about keeping your head above water and trying not to be dashed into a coconut tree or an oncoming cruise liner.

I generally field around one-hundred questions and requests per week via two phones, two emails, two Facebook pages, and of course never ending face to face. It's nearly impossible, but almost doable, IF the job ended there. I could just about handle all the questions if it was all I had to do. But certainly it isn't.

The hardest part of my job is writing articles and reports both critical parts of my employment. The only way I can write is with complete silence and no interruptions. That means no writing at the office at all which features interruptions every five seconds to five minutes. I love to write but it takes time and silence. My general rule for writing articles (if they are already in my head) is two hours for each article and two hours to locate and label images for each one. That goes to four hours for writing and four hours for images if it's an assigned topic. Every week I must produce a 500 word gardening column for the *Tyler Morning Telegraph*. Every month I must produce a 1,000 word blog, a 500-1,000 word *Grapevine* article, a travel report for the county, a commissioner's report for the county, and Texas Data entries for Texas A&M AgriLife documenting everything I did that month. Every other month I must produce a 1,000 word article for *Texas*

Gardener magazine. And once a year I must produce Achievement Reports and In-Depth Summaries detailing everything I did for the year plus at least two mandatory Result Demonstration Reports on research I did or facilitated that year.

Paperwork is a huge issue. BEFORE I got married I wrote books, reports, and articles early in the morning and in the middle of the night. Unfortunately cats, caterwauling, and a few friends that know when I'm awake have made writing and concentrating very difficult. I'm afraid there will be no more books until I retire!

And then there's my speaking, teaching, and public lecturing. Putting together Power Point presentations takes as much time as writing article and gleaning images, generally twice as long. And photography and filing takes even more time than that. They too all require dead silence and concentration. I've now done almost 2,000 lectures in my life. For the first 20 years of my career I did 50 lectures per year. And though I love to give presentations, they are a logistical nightmare.

I'm not complaining. This is my job. This is my life. However I do need your help. Please be patient. There are always dozens if not hundreds waiting in line in front of you. But also don't hesitate to remind me as each day more questions and requests are piled on top of each other. Please e-mail questions when you can as I can look at those in peace and give better answers. Do not use Facebook for general garden questions as it's absolutely impossible to handle any more. Use the Help Desk and secretary Allison Morrow when you can. Please don't walk into my office without an appointment made through Allison as I'm usually woefully behind on a report or frantically trying to answer another question or beat a deadline. If you are an experienced Master Gardener, please help me answer questions, write articles, and give talks as there simply isn't enough of me to go around. Chime in when you can. If you are a beginning Master Gardener, pace yourself and don't try to ask me every gardening question you've ever had as you probably won't remember all the answers or get them all done anyway. Do not use the Master Gardener intern training class for general gardening questions not specific to the teaching topic of the day as it's distracting to others. And please don't ask me questions or show me things as I'm getting ready to give a program or presentation as it's very difficult to concentrate on the subject at hand. Save those questions for after the program or better yet email them to me. Happy Frenetic Spring! -Greg

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

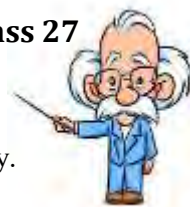
March 5: Bulbs (Greg Grant, a.m.). Perennials (Greg Grant, p.m.). Classroom.

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

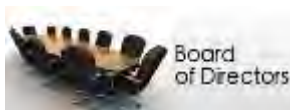
March 19: Carpool trip to Blue Moon Gardens (Edom), Rozell Sprayers, and Breedlove Nursery.

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

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



The Board of Directors met on February 20, 2020. The following items were discussed:



- ◆ Membership dues have been collected from 122 members and a reminder will be sent to those members with outstanding dues for 2020.
- ◆ The Board agreed to announce an increase in dues (approved at a previous meeting) to the membership at the March meeting.
- ◆ The Board discussed the need to fill the coordinator position for the 2020 Calendar. Jean Smith will send an email to all members, soliciting a coordinator. If we do not have a coordinator soon, there will be no calendar.
- ◆ A Clothing subcommittee was formed to discuss alternatives for acquiring new clothing for Smith County Master Gardeners. Victor Long agreed to chair the subcommittee.
- ◆ The Board approved a request from Steve Farrell for the association to join the Tyler Chamber of Commerce to promote the upcoming Garden Tour and Conference.
- ◆ A budget amendment request by Steve Farrell for the Garden Tour and Conference was approved in the amount of \$23,253. If the committee proceeds as planned, the above amount will be covered through sponsorships and revenue from the Conference.
- ◆ The new Membership Directory for 2020-2021 will include the url for the Bylaws.
- ◆ Following the meeting, Laurie Graham took members on a tour of the new SCMGA storage area.

-Janie Fowler

SPRING GARDEN TOUR



Experience an exclusive private tour of Guy & Joan Pyron's beautiful garden and orchid house located in the historic Tyler Azalea District, led by Smith County Horticulturist Greg Grant & Dr. Brent Pemberton, Texas A&M AgriLife Research Professor and Regents Fellow.

**LIMITED TO
35 PEOPLE**

**212 WEST DOBBS ST.
TYLER, TEXAS**

Pre-registration & payment is required
before March 17th.

**TUESDAY,
MARCH 24
9 A.M.-12 P.M.**

To register or for more information contact
the Smith County Texas A&M AgriLife
Extension Office at 903.590.2980

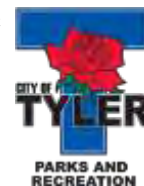
\$15

**TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION**

Tyler Botanical Garden at the Tyler Rose Garden



The committee continues to work on the plan for the garden and the June 6th opening event. Go to the SCMGA website txmg.org/smith/ to view recent changes by clicking on 'Tyler Botanical Garden' where you will see drop down choices. Specific information for the conference program and the garden activities are available on pages created by Elizabeth Waldrop. Similarly the same information links are available at the Coming Events page.



A special thanks goes to Terri Gerber for creating the drop down links. She has also created a page where online purchases of tickets to the conference, using PayPal, can be made. Watch for this opportunity to go live.

With these changes the website has new capabilities which are used for this event, but will be available on the site for the future, giving us a new and improved appearance.

My thanks, *Martin Davis*

2020 LES REEVES LECTURE SERIES - EVERY SECOND THURSDAY (except March)

MAR 19 2020 Rick Lewandowski, Shangrila Botanical Gardens, Orange, Texas. Plant treasures in the Pineywoods of the Gulf South. At the Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Center at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet Street, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX 75962. Social at 6:30 pm. Lecture at 7:00 pm

**2020 MASTER GARDENERS AT THE LIBRARY**

Tyler Public Library

201 S. College Ave., Tyler, TX 75702

March 20, "Changes to Bird Life in Texas – What's All the Flap About?"

With Cliff Shackelford, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Non-Game Ornithologist.

**Registration for the State MG Conference at Waco**

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.



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/>

Smith County Master Gardener Association
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