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**The next SCMG Association meeting is  
Thursday, April 7, 2022  
At 11:30 AM at  
Rose Center**

MG Grapevine Staff  
Mary Jo Madden, Editor

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Greg Grant, Debby Watkins, Henry Burch, Belinda Kromer, Katy Barone, Paul Wick, Becky Wade, Debbie Taylor, Heather Stephens, Susan Buntz, Andie Rathbone, Mary Hamlin, Elizabeth Waldrop, Sherri Matthews, Lynn McGinnis, Lucy Morgan, Dana Anderson, Janet Burns.

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## Garden Winks

The year is sailing by with the March winds pushing us right into April showers! A few cold wet garden days did not stop our gardeners! Everything is shaping up, sprouting up and looking like spring. I so enjoy seeing the surprises but the reality is there is a lot of work from all of you to make those possible. Thanks to all of you working in the Heritage Garden, IDEA Garden and the Shade Garden for all you do! And I have checked in on the thriving plants in the greenhouse and the gardeners there are truly propagating and seeding some really nice plants! Progress is everywhere in our Tyler Botanical Garden! Have you noticed the newly relocated Bluebird houses in the Shade Garden? It is working! The first day of the move had a Bluebird scout showing his lady the possible places for their babies! It was so exciting. I stayed a while after working just to watch that magic!

New pathways in the Shade Garden, lots of new plants in the IDEA garden and all kinds of cleanup, weeding and trimming back in all gardens. Weather wise, there have been challenges but spring has sprung all around. The Help Desk has been really busy too with folks in the community getting their questions answered in preparation for the summer! Thanks to those of you covering the calls and emails! Our 2022 Library Series has proven to be one for the record books. With Greg's lecture in March on "Flapping about Butterflies" getting so much attention in all areas of our media, we are having incredible response from the community. If you missed Greg on KETK, please check it out at the link below.

[Smith County master gardeners to host lectures about butterflies | KETK.com | FOX51.com](#)

Thank you, Greg for being our incredible Horticulturist and leader! The learning never stops!

The Bulb Committee was blessed to learn on the road with a trip to Timpson, TX. Greg spent at least 3 hours teaching about bulbs in his trial garden, varieties of bulbs on his property and on his parent's property. It was a day of golden beauty,

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## April Membership Meeting

For our April Membership Meeting we are looking forward to certifying our newest Master Gardeners of Class 28.

We will also honor our 2021 Awards Winners and welcome our new Interns. The ceremony will be **April 7th at 11:30 at the Rose Garden Center.**

It will be a BYOL, "bring your own sack lunch" luncheon and we will provide drinks and dessert. We are looking forward to seeing you all there.

*Elizabeth Waldrop*



## Why Didn't the *Narcissus* Bloom Well This Year? Greg Grant

"Why didn't the daffodils, jonquils, and narcissus bloom well this year?" I've been asked this question numerous times. We often get questions that are difficult or impossible to answer but this one was obvious and predictable. There are two answers since they took a "double whammy." First, remember back to winter storm Uri. The zero-degree temperatures froze most of the spring bulb foliage to the ground. The damage was worst on narcissus (*Narcissus tazetta*) which are the most cold tender because they hail from the mild Mediterranean. The second most damage was to jonquils (*Narcissus jonquilla*) since they are from milder areas of southern Spain and Portugal. The least amount of damage was to daffodils (*Narcissus pseudo-narcissus*) which are native to a bit colder climate in Western Europe from Portugal to Germany and possibly England and Wales though more likely naturalized there for hundreds of years.

Remember that each year's flowers on these bulbs occur because of food reserves stored up by last year's flowers. So just like cutting it off does, when that foliage froze to the ground it essentially robbed the following year's flowers. Remember that if you ever think of cutting the leaves off before they are ripened to a yellow or brown. The generally accepted "cut off" day in East Texas is around Mother's Day or Memorial Day.

And if that wasn't bad enough, this past winter was very mild with the spring bulbs on pace to bloom early when it suddenly dropped from the 80's to the 20's and froze off the already formed buds on most narcissus species and cultivars. Therefore, those like Chinese sacred lilies and paperwhites aborted altogether while others like *Narcissus x italicus* and 'Grand Primo' aborted many buds which stayed brown and tucked into the foliage.

The good news is that all the proven species that we grow will recover and get back on track after a full season's foliage growth. Sometimes disasters happen, but in the long run there are many more blooming springs than non-blooming ones. -

**Greg**




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### **"Above and Beyond Master Gardener Spotlight" – SCMGA – April 2022**

**Heather Stephens** is clearly a rock star among us with teaching skills, organizational skills, caregiving skills and a passion for making all things perfect in the Master Gardener Classroom! She is continually learning how to do things new and better to offer Class 29 the best experience possible in difficult and challenging environments impacted by the pandemic and even weather!

From a fellow Master Gardener: I think Heather needs to be recognized for what she does with the Class and Mentors. This year she has had to adapt to in-person and Microsoft Teams for the class and not being able to fully connect with them due to COVID mandates; plus, dealing with the crisis of Greg being pulled in many directions. She has put structure into both the class setting and the Mentor program and made both better.

Thank you Heather for giving so much of yourself and never being afraid of learning new things to carry it to the next level! You are an incredible Master Gardener always going "Above and Beyond" for other in our program!

*Belinda Kromer*



## REPORTS FROM THE GARDENS

### Heritage Rose Garden



This month we wanted to digress a bit and tell you about the symbiotic (mutually beneficial) relationship we have with a flock of chickens. Turns out Mary Jo Madden's chickens LOVE weeds and other soft green clippings. Though they'll turn their beaks up at anything prickly! So, every week, instead of leaving our green stuff for the rose crew to pick up and remove, we fill up a trash bag (or bags) of goodies for Mary Jo to take home. We reuse those same bags every week until they are too worn out to hold the clippings. In return, we are rewarded with cage-free, farm fresh eggs for the Heritage Rose Garden volunteers to take home! Mutually beneficial!



*Debby Watkins & Henry Burch*

### **“Above and Beyond Master Gardener Spotlight”– SCMGA – April 2022**

**Laurie Graham** is a phenomenal Garden Leader for the IDEA Garden along with her Co- Garden Leader Cindy Harrington. Laurie is spotlighted by her Co-Leader for her continuous dedication and hard work in the IDEA Garden. In Cindy's words, she works so hard all the time. Her energy and enthusiasm are seen in the garden every Tuesday but certainly not limited to her master gardener work there. She is a wonderful and willing volunteer for SCMGA wherever she is needed with valuable suggestions and recommendations in all areas! Thank you Laurie for all you do for SCMGA and for always going “Above and Beyond”!

*Belinda Kromer*

### Griffin Elementary

Griffin Elementary garden club met Friday, March 4th after school. We planted different kinds of peppers, squash and seeds. We already have onions and peppers in our beds.

Our plan is to plant more after spring break; we talked about having more cold weather even though it was almost spring and we had to wait to plant some plants.

The teacher did a Learn, Grow, Eat, Go lesson using three different type of apples.

Our gardens look so good, the children do such a good job of keeping them tidy. We are going to have as much fun as we can until school is out for summer.

*Becky Wade*



## IDEA Garden

There has been lots of activity in the IDEA Garden. The Rainbow Border has been dug out and replanted with beautiful, new, colorful plants (and a great deal of hard work). These particular plants have been provided with new labels containing identification and care details.

One of the pathways has been re-constructed, again with a great deal of hard work. Another area has been redesigned and now has a concrete bench with decorative railing behind it, and will be a charming spot for pictures in the near future. Gardeners are perusing their areas and thinking about future plant purchases and where to show them to their best advantage.

The SFA spring plant sale is scheduled for April 9 and 10 and usually provides lots of new ideas. Lots of daffodils, narcissi, and snowflakes are looking their best as well as various shades of hellebores. The Ogon cultivar of spirea and Double Take Scarlet quince are blooming, and the latter is complemented by the nearby bottle tree. Another

favorite is the “cabbage rose”, grown from seed by Betty Atchley, and a wonderful reminder to search the seed catalogues next winter. Be sure to check the E-blast for working times in the IDEA Garden and come and see the new developments.

Janet Burns



Need **VMS** instructions for entering your hours? Mary Hamlin put together a great document with step by step instructions, and you can find it in the members section of our web site. Here's the link: [Members - Resources \(txmg.org\)](http://txmg.org/Members-Resources)



The IDEA Garden was born out of a dump-literally. There has been decades of planning by people who have just what it takes to make a showpiece year after year. In the southeast corner of the garden is one of the exceptional master gardeners, Betty Atchley who has been my partner, and mentor for several years.

Betty is a bed leader who has the touch of an artist when applying her skills to Earth-Kind landscaping. Found in her section of the garden are a variety of plants that thrive thanks to improved soil related to adequate mulching, weeding and minimal use of pesticides. The majority of plants in Betty's section are Texas Superstars that include stunning varieties of Coleus, Texas Gold Columbine, a summer blooming Hydrangea, as well as Tidal Wave Petunia just to name a few.

Visitors to the IDEA garden walk away with all kinds of ideas to take home and apply new ways to enjoy their garden. The innovation that Betty applies consistently is in her ability to grow the majority of the plants from cuttings or from seed she acquires. Smith County Master Gardener volunteers work toward assuring that any plant will perform well in East Texas landscapes.

Dana Anderson



## Caldwell School

Students at Caldwell learned about radishes and Pak Choy, then planted seeds in the garden, practicing good spacing and seed depth. The potatoes, onions, spinach, collards and kale are all well on their way. The Brussel sprouts were beautiful and ready for harvest. The fourth graders were so gaga over the bounty they wanted to eat them raw!

In other news, their pollinator garden is beginning to wake, with a host of reseeded larkspur popping up all over.



*Katy Barone*

## “Above and Beyond Master Gardener Spotlight”– SCMGA – April 2022

**Janie Fowler**, the Intern “Mother” of the Year! Have you seen her carrying around her folder with all “her” intern’s log sheets? Has she tapped you on the shoulder to see if you could help her interns with hours needed in areas you may be working and could assist? In the final push to get everyone where they should be to finish up the internships, it is a little crazy! In spite of all that is and has been going on in her personal life, she is always on it to make sure her interns make the best prepared master gardeners and reach that final goal to be certified! It is a time-consuming job that requires major attention to the numbers on the manual logs and in VMS!

Thank you, Janie for your incredible dedication to these new master gardeners! We love you and appreciate all you do “Above and Beyond”!

*Belinda Kromer*

## Shade Garden



The Shade Garden is looking good, with Camellias finally starting to bloom-better late than never! Spring bulbs and Hellebores are also putting on a show.

The bed leaders had a productive planning meeting with lots of good ideas and inspiration for going forward. The woodland walk is beginning to take shape through a great team effort.

Finally, we were happy to report that the red tailed hawk has returned and blue birds are beginning to nest.

*Katy Barone*

## Garden Winks continued

fresh air, picnicking and finally wrapping up at King’s Nursery in Tenaha, TX. Gardening heaven, perfect weather and wonderful fellowship. Thanks to Greg, his wife, sister and parents for such incredible hospitality! It was a beautiful day full of Garden winks!

Wrapping the month of March, we are prepared for the celebrations to come in April to induct new Master Gardeners, to welcome new Interns and finally to acknowledge the stars among us! Don’t miss our April Monthly Membership Meeting, April 7<sup>th</sup> at the Rose Garden! Bring your lunch and have your clapping hands and smiles ready!

THANK YOU ALL for another great month in 2022!

*Belinda Kromer*

**REPORT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING March 16, 2022**

The March 2022 Board of Directors Meeting was held in person in Room 116 at the CottonBelt Building. Following are the highlights of the discussed items:

1. Victor Long and Martha Fowler presented a preview of the annual audit.
2. The purchase of a presentation screen was discussed.
3. The plans for the April Graduation and Awards meeting were shared.
4. The status of scholarships for Horticulture students at SFA & A&M was discussed.
5. The plans for the upcoming Texas Superstar Advanced Training were shared.
6. Volunteer opportunities at Overton were discussed.

*Mary Jo Madden, Past President/Parliamentarian*

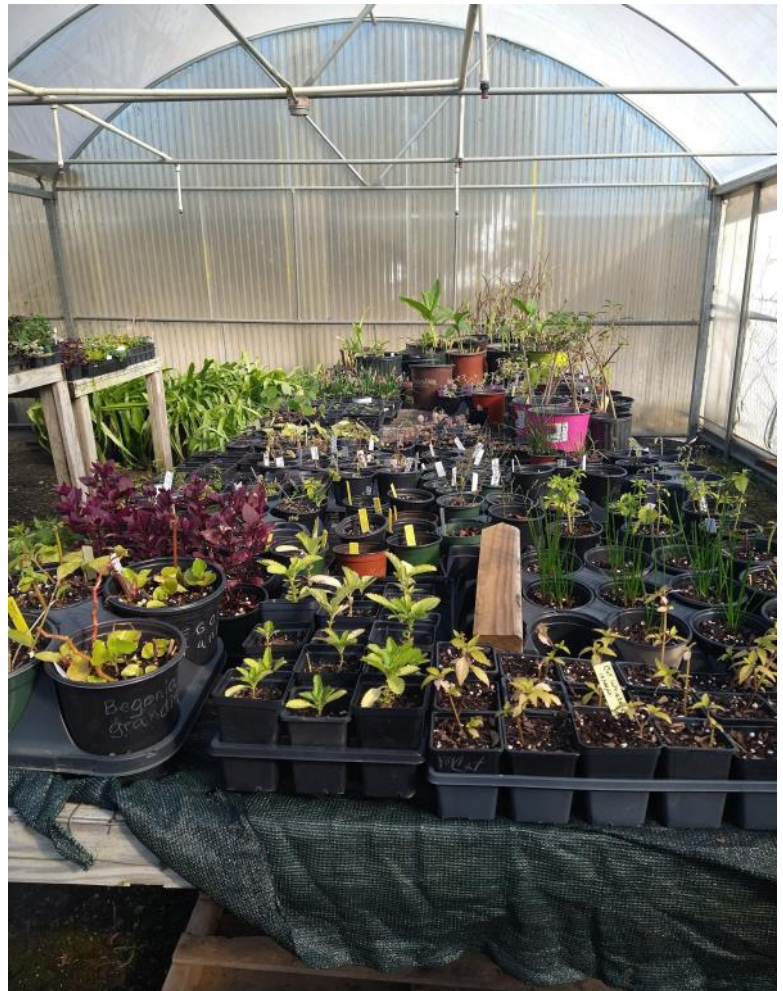
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**Greenhouse Update**

Things at the greenhouse are ever changing. We've been starting around 6 or 7 varieties of seeds each time we meet. The tables are full of flats and there are seedlings galore. We still have lots of rooted cuttings we started in the fall too. It has been a fun and productive year so far.

I would like to thank both Mary Beth McCown and her husband, Roger, for orchestrating the relocation of our large planting table. It was originally attached to the wall, but has been moved out so we can access the table from all sides now. It added plant space that we desperately needed. A big thanks to all the gardeners who worked on that project. It is greatly appreciated. Things will be heating up in April and I'm hoping we can keep our plants housed until Memorial Day. That will give us time for the many seedlings to grow into healthy plants. The idea for the plants that have been grown is to share with the gardeners who worked in the greenhouse this year. So, if you work in the greenhouse and would like to start some of your favorite seeds you need to hurry. SCMGs who have shared in the planting will be able to take plants home some time in early May.

As always thanks to the gardeners who come and work in the greenhouse. It is a job that I couldn't and wouldn't want to do without all of you that show up to help each Wednesday. SCMGs are the best!



*Debbie Taylor*



## TBA

Our friend **Julie Maddox** at NEXT Prairies is hosting a Purple Martin count in May with the Texas Parks and Wildlife. She has invited us to attend and observe or help out.



It is thought that over 90 percent of all the Purple Martins in Texas died in the freeze last year. Julie Maddox knows for sure only 7 of her birds survived. The birds will be caught and blood tested to track DNA of new flocks over the next several years so the Parks and Wildlife will have a better understanding of how the population was affected and whether the limiting of bloodlines will greatly affect the species. The date is not set yet, because of concerns about the weather, but keep it in mind, it should be an interesting day for a great cause. As soon as we know the date we will send it out.

## **“Above and Beyond Master Gardener Spotlight”– SCMGA – April 2022**

**Laurie Graham** is a phenomenal Garden Leader for the IDEA Garden along with her Co- Garden Leader Cindy Harrington. Laurie is spotlighted by her Co-Leader for her continuous dedication and hard work in the IDEA Garden.

In Cindy's words, she works so hard all the time. Her energy and enthusiasm are seen in the garden every Tuesday but certainly not limited to her master gardener work there. She is a wonderful and willing volunteer for SCMGA wherever she is needed with valuable suggestions and recommendations in all areas!

Thank you Laurie for all you do for SCMGA and for always going “Above and Beyond”!

*Belinda Kromer*

## VMS Update

Reminder:

Remember that you can get CEs by viewing a number of on-line presentations. These are detailed in VMS Documents under "Continuing Education Hours On-Line". Go to the Documents section in VMS, sort for Other on the left side of the screen, and you will see the document.

*Mary Hamlin*

## From Our Historian

The new class had been hard at work. Lots of speakers, the tour in Nacogdoches—so much learning! They will soon graduate and become Master Gardener Interns!

MGs are busy working in the gardens as we gear up for a great spring

*Lucy Morgan*



## Social Media

It's April and just as gardening activities ramp up, so does the activity on our Facebook page. Besides an extra long list of things to do this month, we will try to post information about as many plant sales and garden tours as we can find. We will also be trying to post some pictures of the gardens in the Tyler Botanical Garden because I personally think the gardens look their best from April through June.

As always, remember to send me any photos, articles or jokes that you find interesting. I'm always looking for new material

The top posts for February were:

February 4



Reached 13,211

February 18



Reached 4514

February 20 (Marinda Ngyuen)



Reached 3,606

Andie Rathbone

## Class and Mentor News

**Congratulations to Class 28** on completing an accelerated internship and joining the roster of certified master gardeners! All intern classes face unique challenges, and this class was no exception. Immediately following graduation, Class 28 interns were literally launched into the ETSF and Bulbs to Blooms, and they truly excelled! Thank you to all the Class 28 Mentors and SCMGA project coordinators for your support and encouragement to the interns during the past 7 months. The Mentor Team for this class were Mary Cantrell, Brenda Clark, Chris Cochran, Wayne Elliott, Janie Fowler, Tommie Grinnell, Cindy Harrington, Lenka Johnson, Sue Lambert, Luci Morgan, Linda Munn, Joyce Napolitano, Brenda Orbaugh, Anne Pattullo, Cathy Swindell, Becky Wade, Debby Watkins, Redessa Weaver and Paul Wick.

The classroom training for **Class 29** is now in the books, and their internship begins. 25 students completed the 13 week course, and 24 of them will proceed to internship for the next 12 months. It's been a real pleasure to get to spend each Thursday with them. Congratulations to this enthusiastic, fun, multi-talented group and welcome to the Smith County Master Gardener Association! Thank you so much to our wonderful team of Teaching Assistants who made classes run smoothly and kept the students and me caffeinated and on the right track! Co-Coordinator Chris Cochran and TA's Gay Barron, Sandra Dugan, Luci Morgan and Denise Rasco, y'all are just the BEST!

Heather Stephens





## Education Dispatch



We would like to thank the folks that have donated to the scholarship fund for the Summer Kid's Workshop. We already have 19 scholarships taken care of out of the 25 we are offering. The generosity of the membership that has contributed for the children that will enroll in this project is heart warming.

We are finishing up the planning for that Workshop which will be held at Glass Recreation Center from June 20th through June 24th. We are calling it "Nature Detective" and have the wonderful artist who helped us create the Tyler Botanical Garden logo collaborate with us to create a unique version of Shorty the Squirrel who is the mascot for the Parks and Recreation Department in Tyler. Our version is dressed as Squirrel-lock Holmes, to present our theme to the kids, soo cute! Everyday the kids will explore the grounds around Glass, do hands-on learning projects and interact with the teachers and classmates as they explore various aspects of nature and conservation concepts.

We are also finishing up the planning for the Adult Workshops. These are fundraisers for the organization and will be open to both Master Gardeners and the general public. There will be a charge of \$20.00 for each and we will set up an online payment portal on our website to accept payments in advance of the dates.

Both themes are about seasonal issues in the garden and are focused on saving money and time by utilizing thoughtful habits and strategic planning. The first "Summer Stars: Texas Superstars, Plants for Here and Now" will be a Superstar plant overview plus a primer on soil amending, fertilizing, watering and dealing with pests and disease. It will be held June 10th at Glass Recreation from 9 to 11 am. The second, "Surviving the Dog Days: Rejuvenating Your Garden in the Heat" will be held July 29th at Glass Recreation from 9 to 11am. In this one, we will go through heat mitigation strategies, plants that beat the heat, practices to help your garden survive late summer and how to plan and plant a fall garden.



Along with the programs there will be demos for practical education, refreshments served at each workshop, door prizes and swag bags full of fun goodies. We are hoping to have 100 people at each workshop to raise extra funds and take some of the financial pressure off the Bulb Sale which currently is our only big fundraising event.

We hope to see you there to help us support our goal of educating ourselves and the community in best practices to improve our gardens and environment.

Elizabeth Waldrop

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## Garden Guide Update

Garden Guides Spring Schedule (so far!)

I thought I would update our schedule for tours for Spring of 2022. I'm getting lots of calls for tours now and this is what we have confirmed so far:

**April 23, Saturday.** 50 people in this group, retired teachers from all over Texas want to visit the Tyler Rose and Tyler Botanical Gardens starting at the Rose Garden Center Building at 9:15am.

**May 6, Friday.** 10 to 15 people in this group. Would like a tour of the Tyler Rose and Tyler Botanical Gardens starting at 10:15am. These folks are members of the Tyler Garden Club

**May 13, Friday.** 10 to 15 people in this group. Would like to tour the Tyler Rose and Tyler Botanical Gardens starting at 9:45am. This group are members of the Angelina County Master Gardeners.

There are still lots of slots to fill in for both experienced tour guides, students and interns alike! Please go to Sign-Up Genius and take a look around. If this is your first time to tag along..Welcome! This may just be your thing. Come see what we are about! There's always room for more guides. Many hands make light work!

Susan Buntz



## Calendar Committee

We have begun working on the 2023 calendar/garden guide. The subject will be “Creatures in the Garden”. We would love to include your pictures of things you see in your garden - insects, flowers, birds, etc. Please

send them to [matthews1952@sbcglobal.net](mailto:matthews1952@sbcglobal.net) to be considered. We need a great picture for the cover, too.

The next meeting will be April 12th at 1:00, would love to see everyone there to help make this a wonderful garden guide.

*Sherri Matthews*

## Need Help with VMS?

If you are struggling with getting your Volunteer and Continuing Education hours into VMS, we are here to help you! We have **Help Desk** volunteers in the office almost every day, and they can work with you to get those hours entered, using our second computer. So call us or take a look at the SignUp Genius schedule and plan to come by when we are there. We are in the new office space—Room 117.

Here's the link to the SignUp:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054da5ae2aaaf94-helpdesk1>

## Programming Committee Report

**Master Gardeners at the Library** series continues April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11:30 AM with a presentation by guest speaker **Jay White**, editor of **Texas Gardener**. Jay will speak on “Saving the World with Homegrown Bouquets”.

Some 90% of cut flowers sold in the U.S. are now grown overseas. While beautiful, the international trade in cut flowers comes at a high cost to the environment and the people that grow them. Learn how to “save the world” by growing your own flowers or supporting the American producers that provide an environmentally responsive alternative to American consumers. Selected guests get to make their own home-made floral arrangements using techniques discussed in the lecture.

Speakers' Bureau talks in April include:

On April 2<sup>nd</sup> at Whitehouse Library, Andie Rathbone will present a program on spring flower beds.

On April 14<sup>th</sup> at Rubicon Wild Birds Unlimited in Flint, Becky and Dale Wade will discuss gardening for birdwatchers.

*Paul Wick*



Photo of Greg Grant flapping about a Zebra Swallowtail  
by Lucy Morgan





If you are an Amazon shopper (aren't we all?) you can now set your Amazon Smile Charity to SCMGA! We will soon publish instructions for selecting SCMGA for those who haven't used Amazon Smile before. And thanks to **Cynthia Siegel** for reminding us to take advantage of this opportunity!

## EXTRA EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!!

I've gotten some great feedback from some you about your amazing articles and I really appreciate you!! So here's a new idea we are implementing in our monthly newsletter – we will publish the dates, titles, authors and the newspaper your articles will be published in every month! Here's the articles for April:

### **Tyler Morning Telegraph (Sundays only)**

April 3 – “Spring is on the way” - Miranda Arney (*formerly Ngyuen*)

April 10 – “Hummingbirds” - Diane Lestor

April 17 – “Bluebirds” - Paul Wick

April 24 – “My Love Affair with Hellebores” - Heather Stephens



Tyler Morning Telegraph under Lifestyles at <https://www.tylerpaper.com>.

### **Lindale News & Times (Thursdays only)\***

April 7 – “The Common Persimmon” - Shawn Czehowski

April 14 – “The Hungry Caterpillar” - Lyn Benson

April 21 – “Growing Peppers” - Colleen Huntsberger

April 28 – “Keyhole Gardens” - David Fletcher

You can read the Lindale News & Times online for free at <https://www.lindalenewsandtimes.com/current-edition>.




*\*Note: Please remember the Lindale News & Times is a small local newspaper with lots of hometown flavor, so if there's an important community issue or the 4H is having a livestock show or even if a large corporation buys a full page ad, we get bumped that edition. They do try to use all the articles we send, however the date might be different.*

I want to thank MJ for making space in the newsletter for us each month and I hope this information is helpful. You guys are doing a great job on your articles, I love reading each and every one of them, and I appreciate your feedback, keep up the great work!

Lynn McGinnis

# April 2022

## Smith County Master Gardeners

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Shade Garden workday 8:30 AM
3	4	5 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM	6 Shade Garden workday 9:00	7 SCMG Meeting Rose Center 11:30 AM	8	9 SFA Plant Sale!
10	11	12 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM  Calendar Committee 1:00 PM	13 Shade Garden workday 9:00	14	15 Tech Committee 1:00 PM  <i>AgriLife Office Closed</i>	16 Shade Garden workday 8:30 AM
17 	18 	19 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM	20 Shade Garden workday 9:00	21 SCMGA BOD Classroom 10:00	22 MG at the Library 11:30 AM  	23 <i>Grapevine deadline</i>
24	25	26 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM	27 Shade Garden workday 9:00	28	29	30