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**The next SCMG Association meeting is
Thursday, March 2, 2023
At 10:00 AM at
Tyler Rose Center**

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Elizabeth's Thoughts

There is a theory that the reason time moves faster as we age is that our brains are just remembering less details of every day. This trick of the post-childhood brain makes us feel like time moves faster because we don't think about it as much, we simply experience time less acutely. I can tell you when I was a kid the 4 to 5 weeks between Christmas and New Year seemed like the space between my birth-days. Yet the time between last Christmas and the end of February that finds me writing this seems like a few days. And you know what? I am really glad about that! My friends, we are standing on the precipice of spring. We have nearly suc-cessfully slogged all the way through winter and if I missed part of it, I am not complaining.



I am putting seeds in the ground and hauling the sturdy things out of the green-house to gather some sun and rain. Mind you I am not going crazy. The plants are still perched close to the green house in case they need to be hurried back in. I haven't folded up my landscape cloth and plastic yet, but carefree, freeze-less nights are coming. I will be happy to fill up the empty spots in my storage cabinet with those winter garden garments when the time comes.

As Master Gardeners we value the precious days of spring cherishing the cold, warm, wet and windy all the same. And we aren't resting on our laurels just gazing out at it from our easy chairs. Our gardens in the Tyler Botanical Garden are get-ting their winter-end clean up. They are being brightened with annuals and re-placements for the plants we inevitably loose each winter. We have our committees up and running. The Garden Guides have a new tour script and smaller tour route, focusing on our beautiful gardens. Navye and Susan need volunteers for Azalea Tours that are coming up. The Calendar Committee is deciding between ideas for 2024's offering that keeps us on track all year long. Home Garden Tour is happen-ing again after a four-year hiatus. We need all hands-on deck to make this a great year to welcome people back to our tour and into Master Gardener gardens. Let Mary and Brenda know what you can do to help. September and October might seem awfully far away but The Fair and Bulb Sale Committees are also planning. It takes all of us to pitch in with these projects to make them the amazing experienc-es we expect them to be. Happily because of our hard work and commitment we always manage to make each year better than before.

So, breathe in the shiny new days of spring in all their glory. Dig in the dirt and plant up your gardens. And when you are done remember your friends at MG need your help too and dig in with us.

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MG Advanced Training Greg Grant

I was recently surprised to hear that a number of Smith County Master Gardeners didn't understand the intent and requirements for advanced training, so here is the scoop straight from the state Texas Master Gardener website;

Purpose: To provide advanced training whereby a corps of Master Gardeners can obtain advanced training which supports or expands specific county educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

Guidelines: The primary purpose of the Advanced Training program is not to designate "experts" in a field of study or topic; rather, it is designed to identify Master Gardeners who have received additional training to support specific county educational programs or projects.

Advanced Training should be designed to empower the Master Gardener with the knowledge and skills required to effectively support designated programs or projects. This may include administration of projects, training of Master Gardeners, clientele presentations, and/or applied research and demonstrations.

Basic Requirement: To be eligible for an Advanced Training, an individual must possess an up-to-date Master Gardener certification.

Training and Volunteer Requirements: Advanced Training should be a minimum of 16 hours in length. Hours of training will depend on subject matter and level of expertise to be obtained. Training might include: formal classroom training, field trips and tours, mentoring by experts, and/or self-directed study. Following completion of the training requirement, an individual should complete a minimum 20 hours of volunteer service in a designated program or project to obtain their Master Garden Advanced Training certification.

It doesn't matter whether an individual pays for the training themselves or not. I will not sign the paperwork for anyone to take advanced training that isn't committed to returning volunteer hours back to our educational programming using what they have learned. We are currently working on specific requirements for Smith County to add to the SCMGA bylaws, policies and procedures.

REPORT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING



The February BOD meeting of 2023 was held in person Thursday, February 16th at the Cotton Belt Building. The following topics were discussed:

- Investment options for SCMGA Reserve Fund monies
- SCMGA 2023 Scholarships
- Status of member Educational Field Trip
- Highlights of the first State Directors meeting
- Status of Background Checks
- Possible modifications to Lifetime Member policy
- Recommendation of application JotForms to use in parallel with SignUp Genius for one year trial
- Request from ETSF for SCMGA participation in an interactive butterfly habitat

Belinda Kromer, Past President/Parliamentarian

REPORTS FROM THE GARDENS

Heritage Rose Garden

February was plagued with rainy Tuesdays so we weren't in the garden as much as we needed to be. But we were able to start cutting out the dead wood on the roses and will do the main pruning the final week of the month. Bulbs are the star of the show right now! But these warmer than normal days will put an end to the show sooner than we would like.

Greg gave the Heritage volunteers a tour of the various bulbs that are growing in the 3 gardens and helped us identify them. Remembering is always the key!

Linda Gurasich



Greenhouse Update



We are deep in the winter months for the greenhouse, but you wouldn't know it by some of the warm weather we've had after the ice storm. Next week is supposed to be really warm as well. That means regular trips to the greenhouse to open the doors and get some fresh air in there.

We have invested lots of time in starting seeds and we want to keep them as healthy as possible. We have an abundance of tomato seedlings that are doing quite well. Some have developed their true leaves and have been repotted. A little fertilization will hopefully get them growing nicely. Hazel brought several types of pepper seeds to share and we got those potted up.

March will be a maintenance month as we nurture our seedlings into nicely grown plants. Food crops are not something I grow normally, so this is a learning experience for me. The interns will be joining me starting in April for their

required hours. It will be nice to see all the new folks who stuck it out and will be graduating. I hope some of them take an interest in the greenhouse and continue to participate in the fun long after their hours are fulfilled. I know they had propagation lessons in class recently, so maybe they can teach us new techniques. Thanks to the wonderful gardeners who come to the greenhouse to help plant and care for their hard work. I'm hoping with no more crazy winter weather in February or March, we will be sharing our plants come April and May. But as always, it's a waiting game to see what weather Mother Nature brings us.

Happy gardening!

Debbie Taylor



IDEA Garden



Writing articles for the Grapevine is an excellent opportunity to learn something new and I certainly have learned more about this shrub while writing this article. This month the Double Take Scarlet Quince is a traffic-stopper with its vibrant red double blossoms on leafless branches. It is located in the small circle section on the north end of the garden. This leggy shrub generally blooms from mid to late February through early to mid-April, though this year it began blooming at the end of January. Last year it had a random single blossom at the beginning of June! Not all buds open at the same time which is how this shrub manages to bloom for two months.

This is a patented shrub marketed by both Proven Winner and Monrovia. I first “met” this shrub in 2016 when it had just two branches

about 18” high. It is now about 5’ high with more branches but is still very airy or leggy spreading to about 4’ wide.. Its prime “wow” time is obviously blooming time. In the IDEA garden, a lantana planted itself at the base and nicely fills in during the summer while the quince is just a gangly green shrub.

According to my research, while ordinary quince flowers on new wood and has thorns, this shrub blooms on old wood and is thornless. In the garden I’ve observed most blossoms on branches that are 1-4 years old. To give the shrub some shape, it should be trimmed after flowering has ceased. For best results, plant in full sun as this is a heat loving plant. It can tolerate some shade, but it needs at minimum 6 hours of sun a day. It is drought tolerant once established which I can verify from mine in my home garden. .

Brenda Strong



Garden Guides

The Garden Guide program is coming back! Navye and I have agreed to co-chair this program. It will take two of us to fill Susan Buntz’s shoes. She did such an amazing program! But, we need your help. As a Master Gardner you have everything it takes to be a garden guide. The requirements are:

- You like people
- You like a casual stroll through a garden
- You like to share your knowledge as well as receive knowledge from others
- You are ok with not knowing all the answers

There will be a one hour training or refreshing on Tuesday, March 14, at 11:30. We will meet at the Tyler sign located at the rose gardens.

Garden tours will likely begin in March with the azalea trails. Typically there will be one leader and 1-2 helpers. This will depend on size of the group. Once the current class become interns they will have opportunities to shadow the guides.

Please consider this fun project.
Hope to see you March 14th.

Thank you!

Navye Cummings and Susan Seale

Shade Garden

February was a cold and wet month, limiting the number of work days we had. Nonetheless, we managed to squeeze some in. The most recent cold snap brought down some big limbs in the Shade Garden, smashing to smithereens glass globes on the light posts and a few of the old, barely-hanging-on camellias. Some of the Japanese maples also took a hit, though not as badly. We have been amazed at their resilience. As a yin to the winter yang, we planted in the woodland walk 'Mrs. G.G. Gerbing' azaleas, adding to the three kindly donated by Laurie Graham. The shade crew also planted a couple of dry root 'Ann' magnolias we obtained from Greg (thank you), and two paper bark maples, courtesy of Liz Wiley.

In the works is the installation of a park bench along the new granite path. Special thanks and recognition goes to AVCO Commercial Roofing who donated the funds for it's purchase. We worked through Texas Parks and Recreation to obtain the bench, which is now on order. We expect it to be installed by late spring/early summer. In other news, Dan Gerber and Jeff Brown have put their heads together to work out some drainage issues in the new area. The challenge is channeling run-off effectively, while still maintaining the integrity of the new path. Our aim is to establish a functional and beautiful feature accessible to all. On the horizon many tasks lie ahead. We are looking to bring in boulders to the new area, continue replacing camellias around the garden, and add a variety of new woody and hardy perennials. We will also be on a mission to better label the Shade Garden's living specimens, starting with our maple collection.

Katy Barone



March Membership Meeting

Please mark your calendars for our March SCMGA members meeting, at 10:00 am at the Rose Center.



Our educational topic, re-scheduled from February, will be: Begonias- More Than Wax-leaf, Garden Variety! Or Begonias You've Never Seen But Need in Your Landscape! Taddie Hamilton, Tarrant County Master Gardener, and Don Miller, both members of Southwest Begonia Society, are enthusiastic Begonia lovers. They will be showing us types of each with examples, how to care for them and how to best make them sustainable for our hot summers and cold winters. The plants they bring as examples will be door prizes also.

Gail Bean

Historian's Corner

Smith County Master Gardeners began with a bang in 1994. The very first class began helping to maintain the Heritage Garden. The Heritage Garden has gone on to be one of the show stoppers in the Tyler Botanical Gardens. Teaching composting through vermiculture was a fun project done in conjunction with Camp Tyler. They also worked with adjudicated youth at the Roberts School Juvenile center to complete a beautification of the landscape. The SCMG received permission in 1997 to begin to build a demonstration bed containing annuals, perennials, trees, and shrubs. It was ultimately opened to the public in 1999 and formally named the IDEA Garden. A Hosta trials was begun in the Camellia Garden which was the start of the Shade Garden. In 1999, a Northeast Texas Gardening Guide calendar was launched.



The SCMG began working with Dr. Brent Pemberton with the TAMU plant trials in Overton in 1997. The Tip of the Week column was introduced through the Tyler Morning Telegraph and our master gardeners still write a weekly column thirty years later. By then SCMG also participated in many projects such as community gardens at the McClendon House, a Butler College community garden, and Tyler Day Nursery Garden.

To this day, many of these early projects are still going strong such as the IDEA Garden, Heritage Garden, calendar, Shade Garden, Arbor Day partnership with the city, Grapevine newsletter, and a robust education program.

The first five classes certainly blazed a trail for the classes that followed!

Tommie Ann Grinnell

Calendar/Gardening Guide Update

It is time to begin work on our 2024 Gardening Guide and Calendar. Our first meeting will be on March 7 at 1:00 in room 116 at the extension office. We will need to select a theme that will be interesting to everyone. Put your thinking caps on and send me some good suggestions. There are lots of different jobs to be done to get this completed. I need people to write articles, get dates for interesting events in the area, update websites, and send me some great pictures. This needs to be another amazing calendar to educate the public. Plan to attend and see what a good time we have learning new things.

Sherri Matthews

VMS Update

VMS and eMail

Lately we've had an uptick of VMS email non-delivery or going to junk mail. There still is no resolution on that problem, but they gave us two different addresses that they are requesting MGs add to their contacts. There is no guarantee that this will solve the problem, but might help, so we are asking MGs to add the below two addresses to their contact list. This is especially important for persons who are repeatedly having issues with VMS email. And it's also especially important that if you do add the addresses, and your VMS email continues to non-delivery or goes to junk mail, to let us know. We are trying to keep pressure on state to solve this problem. So here are the two addresses. Again, be sure to let Mary Hamlin (mhamlin@flash.net) know if you continue to have VMS email issues even after you whitelist these addresses.

noreply@email.texasmg.org
vms.texasmg.org

Mary Hamlin

Social Media

This month's top Facebook posts illustrate the power of sharing in extending the reach of our publicity efforts for SCM-GA events and educational outreach. As we continue to publicize our Library lecture series and our Spring Home Garden Tour, please remember to share our posts to your own timeline so we can spread our message to the largest audience possible.

Here are the top three posts in January:



January 9
7,686 people reached



January 23
12,007 people reached



Andie Rathbone

January 15
793,440 people reached

New Class and Mentor News

Class 30 is 2/3 of the way through the New Member Class. We'll have 26 wonderful Interns for you to welcome on April 6th. Students will meet their Mentors at a potluck lunch in the Extension Classroom on March 30 from 12:00-1:30 pm. Many thanks to the great folks who volunteered to be Class 30 Mentors!



Front L-R: Kaylee Browning, Sharon Walhood, Stacie Stults, Cynthia Adams

2nd Row L-R: Linda Thomas, Julie O'Brien, Dora McLain, Terry Strecker, Von Hogan, Diane Everhart

3rd Row L-R: Alice Bailey, Judy Googins, Sandy Ellis, Lynn Sylvester, Kim Smith, Karen Walker, Jack "Jackie, Thomason

Back Row L-R: Chris Pruett, Rich Harvey, David Googins, Stephen Strecker, GG Martin, Stephen Childs, Marlyn Waddleton, Barbara Nelson, Jim McLain

Heather Stephens

Master Your Garden – Channel 19

If you're home at lunchtime on Thursdays, be sure to tune in to Channel 19 for our "Master Your Garden" TV spots. This past month SCMG members Colleen Huntsberger, Wayne Elliot, and Deby Watkins did an outstanding job talking about planting onions, feeding birds and pruning roses.

This coming month our scheduler is as follows:

March 2 – Jolana Samkroger, "Things To Do in March"

March 9 – Laurie Graham, "Epic Tomatoes"

March 16 – Elizabeth Waldrup, "MG at the Library – Physic Gardens"

March 23 – Mary Hamlin, "Spring Lawn Care"



Andie Rathbone

From Bulbs To Blooms



As we enter March, From Bulbs to Blooms is rolling along, still looking for bulbs to dig! This month we really kick off our year by visiting Greg's place out in Shelby County, where he has several properties, including our bulb farm. This year, we are also going to attempt our first Trillium Tromp, where we walk the piney woods and look for trillium and their unique early-spring blooms, in the midst of hog ruts, armadillo holes, creek bed slopes, and whatever else nature throws our way. We'll have a lovely social time, involving good food and daffodil digging. Consider joining the committee in the future to get in on this good fun.

Thank you to the folks who have let us know where there are bulbs we can dig and those who have dug some already! It's especially nice when we're able to rescue them from people who just want them gone, or when they're in an area that's now being developed, or in a public right-of-way where we don't have to find someone to give us permission. Please continue to scout for more - it's the only way we can "go local" without growing all our own bulbs.

This being our 25th year, we have lots of projects to accomplish before our actual sale takes place, so if you're interested in helping anywhere along the way, please get in touch. We'd be happy to find a way to use your talents!

Bloominbucks.com is the way to shop Brent & Becky's. The link is kind of slow - be patient; then click on "Smith County Master Gardener" in the drop-down menu; then choose your items. Be aware that they will schedule your shipment according to Hardiness Zone. You are given the option to pay with your order or when items ship. Fall-planting options begin soon.

Lenka Johnson

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

Tyler Morning Telegraph (Sundays only)

March 5 – Texas Our Texas – Mary Bonrepos

March 12 – Spring is in the Air – March Gardening Tasks – Andie Rathbone

March 19 – Make a Plant Map – Marinda Arney

March 26 – Make a Plan for Outdoor Space – Shelia Preddy

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

Lindale News & Times (Thursdays only)*

March 2 – Texas Our Texas – Mary Bonrepos

March 9 – Spring is in the Air – March Gardening Tasks – Andie Rathbone

March 16 – Right Plant for the Right Place – Ivy Greening

March 23 – Raised Bed Gardens – Susan Hatley

March 30 – Lucky Spider – Carol Koehler

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, high school football 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.*

Lynn McGinnis



Programming Committee Report

The Library Lecture Series continues its success of offering educational outreach to the community. Andie Rathbone's presentation this month drew in 115 persons. We anticipate another crowd to hear our President Elizabeth Waldrop speak on "The Physic: Gardens that Heal, Gardens that Harm" on 17 March. If you want to help, just be at the Tyler Public Library at 10:30-ish.

The Speaker's Bureau is in full mode with upcoming presentations. March will include educational programs to garden/civic organizations. If you have a program that you wish to present, let Becky or Dale Wade know. Dale is available to assist in its production. If you have made a presentation to a group related to Master Gardening, be sure to not only let the Wades know, but load it into VMS as well.



Stay tuned for an upcoming meeting regarding Tuesdays in the Park.



Thank you to all presenters and volunteers. It does not work without you.

Dale Wade

March 2023

Smith County Master Gardeners

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Shade Garden workday 9:00	2 SCMG Meeting Rose Center 10:00 AM Class 30 Meets 9:00	3	4 Shade Garden workday 8:30 AM
5	6	7 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM Calendar meeting 1:00 PM	8 Shade Garden workday 9:00	9 Class 30 Meets 9:00	10	11
12 	13	14 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM	15 Shade Garden workday 9:00 Member Outing Kings Nursery	16 Class 30 Meets 9:00 SCMG BOD CottonBelt 10:00	17 MG at Tyler Library 11:30 AM	18 Shade Garden workday 8:30 AM
19	20 	21 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM	22 Shade Garden workday 9:00	23 Class 30 Meets 9:00	24 Grapevine deadline	25
26	27	28 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM	29 Shade Garden workday 9:00	30 Mentor Lunch Classroom 12:00	31	