

MG Grapevine

<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

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**The next SCMG Association meeting is
Thursday, September 7, 2023
At 10:00 AM at
Tyler Rose Center**

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Inside this issue:

Board of Director Notes.....P 4
Committee Reports.....P 2-11
Garden Reports.....P 3-4
Greg's Column.....P 2
September Calendar.....P 10

Elizabeth's Thoughts

I may speak for all of us when I say, I am sick of this weather. It's been depressing to watch the beautiful green world turn into a crispy crunchy version of itself. I have been suffering along with my dying shrub beds and the ever-browning trees. There is such a sense of defeat in watching something that you spend so much time, energy, thought, and love on, having to deal with such extreme temperatures.



I was so hopeful in the Spring, the 3 year La Nina was over, we were in a neutral pattern, everything was going to go back to normal. I bought all sorts of new plants and shrubs and filled every hole that had been carved in my garden over the last few years. I researched and got plants with better cold tolerances that could still handle heat and humidity. In May and part of June my borders looked like magazines—well, if you took pictures of the baby shrubs up close. But it was very pretty, and I felt like a successful gardener again. Then the weather got hotter and drier, and it never stopped. When it's as hot as Phoenix in Tyler, something is dreadfully wrong. Now most of those newly planted plants are dead. They did not have time to grow enough roots to protect themselves from what they had to face this summer. I am back to being a terrible gardener. No rest for the wicked.

One interesting thing in all the torture of watching your gardens not just get overgrown and mangled by the ravages of late summer, but actually die, is that many of the things we are taught about gardening work in the most awful of situations. After using mulch, slow watering techniques, then ollas and still watching my peppers wither and die, I hung some shade cloth. The poor things are just as green and full as though we weren't baking in a hell of temperatures that average well over 100 degrees for 6 weeks. I have only gotten two jalapenos since June, but the plants are healthy. There are other things. The bubblers that I put on my ornamental trees have kept them, and the grass around them, green and healthy too, with only one deep watering every two weeks. Every change I made was due to information I got from AgriLife and other MGs.

I think that we all need to focus on the plants that have survived. I hope we all share our successes and our failures with each other. Hopefully we can build up a bank of knowledge about what works in this changing climate. After all we can't rely on the big box stores or even most of our local nurseries to test and find the plants that can roll with these crazy weather punches. I am counting on our education, knowledge and gift of gab to guide me going forward. Knowing we are all in this together helps.



Bulbs To Blooms Greg Grant

For their 25th anniversary, the Smith County Master Gardeners will present well-known speakers and authors, Chris Weisinger of The Southern Bulb Company and Greg Grant, Smith County's Texas A&M AgriLife Extension horticulturist. The lectures begin at 9 a.m. on Saturday, 21 October, at Pollard United Methodist Church (3030 New Copeland Road, Tyler). They will be bringing a selection of their own East Texas grown bulbs for the sale to those who attend the conference. Attendees will also have a chance to win fabulous door prizes, including two wonderful, two-night getaway packages, and a "super-sampler" of locally grown bulbs.

Get-away Package Number One is a two-night stay at The House of Seasons, Lady Bird Suite, in historic Jefferson, Texas, valued at \$500. Get-away Package Number Two is a two-night stay (king room) at Church Street Inn, a boutique hotel, in historic Natchitoches, Louisiana—valued at \$1000.

After the door prizes are awarded, there will be a mini "Run for the Bulbs" when the special bulbs farmed by the speakers are presented for sale; first come; first served.

Back by popular demand, the SCMG webstore (scmg-online.company.site) will open at 7 a.m. on Monday, 9 October, and close at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, 18 October. Bulbs featured in the sale are all locally-trialed, hardy, heirloom, and hard-to-find – quite a few of them rarely available for

sale. A small selection of hardy trees and shrubs, along with autographed books by the two speakers, plus the new SCMG 2024 calendar and garden guide will be available for pre-order. Anything ordered from the webstore must be picked up between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., Saturday, 21 October, beginning immediately after the conference.

During pick-up hours, there will be a plethora of Smith County Master Gardeners to answer gardening questions; "bonus" bulbs, artwork, and tee shirts for sale; children's activities, and more helping them celebrate their exciting milestone. For a fun, educational, and exciting day, plan to join!

The Smith County Master Gardeners have worked diligently through the years identifying and making available long-lived, Earth-Kind bulbs that don't require irrigation, pesticides, or fertilizer.

For more information visit the Smith County Master Gardener website at <https://txmg.org/smith/> or follow them on Facebook. Proceeds from the sale support horticulture education in Smith County, the Tyler Botanical Garden, and scholarships for horticulture students at Texas A&M and Stephen F. Austin State Universities. Smith County Master Gardeners are trained volunteers through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

September Membership Meeting

"Common Garden Pests and their Management"

Make sure you mark your calendars for our Monthly Chapter meeting to hear Dr. Khan and a topic we all struggle with.

September's meeting will be September 7 at 10 a.m.

Dr. Rafia Khan Ph.D.

Assistant Professor and Extension Entomology Specialist at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Overton, Texas

Her topic will be "Common Garden Pests and Their Management"

City of Tyler Rose Center

1 Continuing Education credit is available (1 C.E.)

Gail Bean

REPORTS FROM THE GARDENS

Heritage Rose Garden

Not much to say about the garden right now. We have had a group of dedicated volunteers working in the heat to keep the weeds under control and the irrigation system working. I so appreciate our wonderful volunteers!

Linda Gurasich

Shade Garden

The theme for August in the Shade Garden was moles, boulders and benefactors. Moles have taken up residence in the Shade Garden and are making themselves at home. Lucky for us, our very own Keith Hansen is an expert on the subject (who knew!?) He kindly shared a very informative article he had published describing in detail the ins and outs of proper mole extraction. To say the least, the process is complicated (needle-haystack) and requires time and patience. As you can imagine, there was lively and hilarious discussion among the SG team as to alternate ways to handle the situation. So, for the time being, until we sort it out, the critters will serve as our garden mascots.

In other news, the park bench we have been waiting on landed in the woodland area. We are beyond grateful for this generous donation by AVCO Commercial Roofing. Oriented facing east, visitors will have a lovely view across the Shade Garden, through two beautiful Japanese maples, toward the IDEA Garden. A shout out is in order to the city crew who did a fantastic job on the install. Also added were several large boulders. The folks at The Yard did some impres-

sive maneuvering setting them in place. The stones certainly make a statement and will serve as casual seating for visitors. We continue to work out irrigation, but more on that next month.

Lastly, the Shade Garden team gathered to plan the rest of the year's projects and priorities, next year's plantings (with an emphasis on hardy and water wise shrubs, trees and perennials), better ways to improve SG education and outreach, and the budget for 2024.

Katy Barone



IDEA Garden

Everyday I wake up and see another heat advisory alert on my phone. I will be interested to read statistics on the number of days we have endured triple digit temperatures this summer. We may be fortunate enough that by the time you read this, temps have dropped down to the 90's! Working in your own yard may be on hiatus but work in the botanical gardens must go on, so we have been gathering at 8 a.m. on Tuesdays for several weeks now in the IDEA garden! Thanks to all who have come to participate, new and seasoned members alike! You are appreciated!



So while you may not enjoy standing out in the blazing sun at 105°, there are two plants in our garden that really start to 'pop' with the heat. The Pride of Barbados is one that is in the Texas Superstar section. You can't miss it with the loud orange and yellow blooms. It just screams 'hey, over here!' It's a returning perennial in south Texas, evergreen in frost free climates but being in North Texas, we lose it to freezes most years and have to replace it. It grows very tall, 8 to 12 ft, likes well-drained soil and as I said earlier, tolerates very high temps and drought. Best planted in late Spring to early summer but the hotter it gets, the faster it grows!

The other heat loving plant is what we call ornamental okra. This is a small, low plant in the mallow family (as is all okra) and has a pretty red bloom. The flower turns into pods which are not edible but we save the seeds from those dried pods. Cindy said Sue Adey first shared the seeds for the IDEA garden and they have been collected every year for re-planting and sharing. Greg also shared that the seeds used to be sold in seed catalogs 40 to 50 years ago. Like edible okra, it is best to wait until early heat of summer to plant from seed. It never gets over about 1 to 2 ft tall with similar spread. You can't miss it either as it's in the bed straight ahead as you walk in the pergola entrance to the garden! There are also a few in the succulent section. There are also many purple salvias and yellow 'goldsturm' rudbeckia or (Black-Eyed Susan) blooming and the bees and butterflies are enjoying flitting and fluttering around in our beautiful IDEA garden!

If you've got the summer doldrums, put on your hat and come early one morning to enjoy these beauties!

Laurie Graham

REPORT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING August 17, 2023

The August 2023 Board of Directors Meeting was held in person at the Cotton Belt. Among the items discussed were the following:

- Timing of Budget Committee meeting
- Nominating Committee members and timing of meeting
- Changes to background check procedures
- Changes to use of codes in VMS
- Goodman Museum Gardens Project announced
- Possible new responsibilities for some BOD members

Belinda Kromer, Past President/Parliamentarian

Greenhouse Update

To say it's the dog days of summer wouldn't even begin to describe what these last many weeks have been like for gardeners. These intense burning heat days have done a lot of damage to lots of gardens across the area including mine. The most common phrase I hear from gardeners is "they are just trying to keep their plants alive". August summers are always hot, but this one is especially intense and unforgiving. I popped by the greenhouse the other day around noon and it was 116 degrees in there.

We have been able to procure several pallets that we will using to provide the correct environment for our shade plants. The full sun plants will be on top shelves and shade plants under the tables on the pallets. This worked well last year for the coleus and other plants, but we didn't have enough pallets. That problem has been solved. I want to thank everyone who shared information in helping me get these pallets.

I am working on finding some seeds from a list that was given to me by Laurie Graham. They are plants that are hard to come by in a commercial setting. I was able to get the Lord Baltimore Hibiscus Moscheutos seeds. I purchased them from a gentleman in Maryland. We will be starting those seeds in the greenhouse this coming year. I hope to have good luck with them if they germinate as easily as most hibiscus seeds. Time will tell.

I want to thank our SCMG Dana Bass for going above and beyond for the greenhouse. A wheelbarrow is something we have been discussing purchasing. As with most things, the price has increased and made it hard to fit one in our budget. Dana got in touch with a gentleman named Eldon Kidd from Brownsboro who donated a brand new wheelbarrow to the greenhouse. So, I want to thank Dana and Eldon Kidd for keeping us in your thoughts and actions.

There couldn't have been a better gift bestowed upon us.

That is all the information that I have to share at present. The greenhouse will begin in mid September, but I will monitor the 30 day forecast for our area to see what the weather brings. I will send out an email via Mary Hamlin and the Eblast as to what day we start. So watch for those emails. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the greenhouse, you can call, email or text me.

Debbie Taylor



Help Desk Update

It's been another interesting month at the Help Desk! There's so much to learn, and so many opportunities to do so. A woman taking an online class to become an herbalist came by with an armful of pressed plants, needing help with ID. Julie O'Brien was very kind and efficient in working with her, encouraging her to learn how to make plant IDs. Lynette Sewell has returned to her Tuesday afternoon shift, after taking a nice vacation. Scherel Carver is going to be absent for all of September, if anyone is looking for something to do on Friday mornings, her regular shift. Andie Rathbone manages to fit us into her busy schedule on Monday mornings. Colleen Huntsberger has grabbed a couple of slots, in an effort to make it easier for Interns to get those required hours. The link is below, if you can help us out and do the same!

Historian's Corner

Thank you to all the former SCMGA presidents for your insight into the history of our organization. I've conducted interviews with past presidents and look forward to sharing their memories with all of you.

But first, I'd like to congratulate former County Horticulturist Keith Hansen who was honored for his contribution to the horticulture and Earth Kind initiatives in Smith County by our county commissioners in August. It was an honor well deserved. Without Keith, SCMGA would not be the same organization.

Beginning in 1994 with leadership from Keith Hansen as County Horticulturist and first president Sue Adey, we set forth on this journey. Our organization has grown to fulfill its mission in ways that were never dreamed of 30 years ago.

Anne Brown was the president from 2001-2003. During her time as president, the Smith County Master Gardeners hosted the state conference for Texas Master Gardeners. It was a huge undertaking, and a source of great relief when everything went swimmingly. Anne recalls going on a MG field trip to Henderson to view a garden. Afterwards several members remarked that they would love to see a garden tour hosted by the SCMGA. Anne said, "Great idea. You organize it." The first garden tour, which included a mix of gardens, some created by Master Gardeners and others by local gardening enthusiasts, took place later that year. Isn't it amazing that today the tradition still continues? Anne served as project coordinator for the Heritage Garden for thirteen years. Today she is a Lifetime Member.

Andie Rathbone was the president in 2006-2007. During that time the membership directory added photos to go along with pertinent information about each member. Our own Martin Davis, president 1998-1999, took most of those photos. I have personally found the photos to be very helpful in getting to know my fellow members. Also, during that time, the policy and procedure manual was formalized. Today Andie serves on the Board as member at large and in many other capacities, including all social media.

Cindy Harrington became president in 2009. Job descriptions were developed for officers, directors, and project leaders. Cindy also believes that during this time the Grapevine newsletter was first delivered via email instead of U.S. Postal service. Today Cindy serves as a project leader for the IDEA garden and is famous for her snow cone machine that appears on hot workdays.

Tommie Ann Grinnell

VMS Update

CEs can be gotten in a number of ways including some on-line sites. A document detailing CE opportunities can be found in the "Docs and Newsletter" section of VMS. Sort documents (left side of page) for "Educational Materials" and open the document titled "Continuing Educational Opportunities".

Mary Hamlin

Calendar Committee News

The 2024 calendar has been sent to the printer. It should be ready for sale about the middle of September. Now we need people to deliver them to the businesses that will sell them for us. If you are interested in doing that, please let me know. Also if you are speaking anywhere or going to a meeting that people might want to buy them, please take some with you. They will be \$10.00 each again this year. I hope everyone will enjoy our content with lots of information about trees.

Sherri Matthews

Social Media

Oh, my lord it's hot out there and I don't see any real relief in sight. But no matter, we are busy promoting our SCMGA events. Our First Tuesday in the Garden talks start the day after Labor Day, the East Texas State Fair is coming up, and then it will be time for the From Bulbs to Blooms Sale and Conference. We'll be promoting all these events on Facebook with special emphasis on the 25th Anniversary of From Bulbs to Blooms, so please make sure to share our posts to your own page so we can get the largest audience possible for our biggest fundraiser of the year. With your help we can make this our best bulb sale ever.

Here are your top posts for July:

Andie Rathbone



July 21
2,992,720 people reached



July 28
38,541 people reached



July 21
10,002 people reached

Nominating Committee News

The 2023-2024 Nominating Committee for the Board of Directors commenced in August. Their initial meeting will be September 13 from 1-3 p.m.

Nominating Committee members for this year are:

Gail Bean
Cindy Harrington
Mary Hamlin
Andie Rathbone/Elizabeth Waldrop
Brenda Strong

This organization is able to do what it does because of the strength of its membership and their willingness to work together to provide community education in a variety of settings. If you are asked to participate as an officer on the Board of Directors, please consider it, step up and provide your leadership to ensure our continued success.

Gail Bean

Seed Bank Report

Did you attend the Pocket Prairie talk this morning? Were you appreciative of the seeds? The basketflower seeds you received came from our Seed Bank, having been donated by Greg Grant last winter.

In addition to seeds collected weekly from the TBG, we do have some seeds that have been donated by MGs. If you are growing plants that can be propagated by seed, please consider collecting some for donation to our Seed Bank. We accept native and non-native plant seeds. We accept cleaned seeds as well as seedheads—we'll clean them before we pop them into the freezer! We need to know where and when collected, by whom, and what plant the seeds are from.

And, if you are giving a talk or holding an educational event and would like some packets of seeds to pass out, please contact me.

MaryJo

From Bulbs To Blooms

September is a month of anticipation when it comes to From Bulbs to Blooms. Lots is going on behind the scenes with writing/proofing of the brochure, setting up the webstore, preparing lots of things so we can bag and count and eventually move it all to the church. We hope you'll all volunteer to join us in the rabbit warren of rooms behind the big classroom of the Cotton Belt Building. It's a crazy space. But I'm getting ahead of myself... Our first bulbs will only be beginning to arrive by September's end.

I would be thrilled if everyone would buy a From Bulbs to Blooms 25th anniversary tee shirt! The first batch sold so well that we ordered more, so no excuses! And we ordered some larger sizes, too, because they are rather form-fitting for unisex shirts (you may want to go up a size). Please wear them around town and talk about the event everywhere. Our webstore opens to the public on Monday, 9 October (MGs wait until the 12th); closes Wednesday, 18 October.

We need some extra publicity, so if you attend a church or use a bank that has an electronic billboard, consider asking them if they might run an ad for us just the few days before our conference (which is OCTOBER 21!) We want to pack the house that day and have lots of happy people go home with all their questions answered, lots of beautiful, locally-trialed bulbs, and slimy kids! (Yup, we'll have kids' activities!)

Just from all that, you should have a good idea of where we're going to be needing people! Watch for lots of Sign-up Genius messages, check your calendar, and plan to be part of the fun! (or not - we have plenty of quiet jobs, too.)

Pray for rain - and a little rain dancing wouldn't hurt! Let's hope our gardens can begin to recover soon.

Lenka Johnson

MGs on TV

We're now into our second season of our Master Your Garden TV spots on Channel 19, and I'd like to thank the channel for agreeing to pre-record our spots at 9:30 in the morning during this awful heat wave. It's certainly made things more pleasant than recording live at Noon. We'll continue with this earlier schedule until our temperatures get more reasonable. If you're slotted to do a spot, remember that we are not limited to recording in the Rose Garden. We can do these anywhere. In the past couple of weeks, we have gone to Vicki Lewis' house to talk about backyard chickens and also to David Gary's house to do a spot about accessibility gardening. The station likes doing our episodes in different locations.

Here's our schedule for September:

September 7	Fall Gardening for Pollinators Elizabeth Waldrop
September 14	Fall Blooming Bulbs Anne Pattullo
September 21	East Texas State Fair Beth Guinn
September 28	Things to Do in October Jolana Damkroger



Andie Rathbone

EXTRA EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!!

Tyler Morning Telegraph (Weekend only)

September 3 – SCMG Fabulous Fall Favorites – Lynn McGinnis

September 10 – Mysterious Voodoo Lily – Katy Barone

September 17 – My Favorite Bulbs – Barbara Nelson

September 24 – Spanish Bluebells – Anne Pattullo



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

Lindale News & Times (Thursdays only)*

September 7 – SCMG Fabulous Fall Favorites – Lynn McGinnis

September 14 – A Flower for Every Southern Garden – Anne Pattullo

September 21 – African False Hosta – Neysa Mueller

September 28 – Tried and True Bulbs – Janice Smith

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 Speakers Bureau continues to educate and promote gardening. We delivered no presentations in August. However, we have five lined up in the future. If you wish to participate and share your knowledge, let us know. If you belong to a group that includes programs at its meetings, let us know. The best way is to have someone call the Help Desk to request a speaker.

The Education Programming Committee held a very successful meeting two weeks ago. Thanks to the thirteen members for attending. We discussed the need for more Master Gardeners as speakers, especially those who completed Advanced Training. If that includes you, please contact us.

Tuesdays in the Garden will be here soon. It happens for three months, Sep-Oct-Nov. in the IDEA garden beginning at noon. This is open to the public so invite your friends. This year's lineup:

5 September - Harvest Season Garden, Elizabeth Waldrop

3 October - Bulbs to Blooms, Lenka Johnson

7 November - Seasonal Floral Arrangements, Megan Lissner & Paige McGuffey of Moss Florist

Library Lecture Series 2024 is virtually complete. We are waiting on speakers to respond with topics and bio sketches. Hope to have the lineup released next month.

Through August SB YTD: 13/garden clubs & 315 individuals

TG YTD: anxiously anticipating LLS 2023 final: 399 individuals (if you missed any one of them, you could have been #400.)

Happy Gardening,

Becky & Dale Wade

September 2023

Smith County Master Gardeners

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Shade Garden workday 8:30
3	4  <i>Office Closed</i>	5 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 8:30 First Tuesday in the Garden noon	6 Shade Garden workday 8:30	7 SCMG Meeting Rose Center 10:00 AM	8	9
10	11	12 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 8:30 Master of Memory 11:00	13 Shade Garden workday 8:30 Nominating Committee 1:00	14	15	16 Shade Garden workday 8:30 
17	18	19 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 8:30	20 Shade Garden workday 8:30	21 SCMG BOD CottonBelt 10:00 <i>Grapevine deadline</i>	22	23
24	25 	26 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 8:30 Master of Memory 11:00	27 Shade Garden workday 8:30	28	29	30