



# MG Grapevine

<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

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

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## Elizabeth's Thoughts

There is no doubt about it, we have entered into a new season. I am cleaning up my gardens and yard, and dotting on my cool weather herbs and vegetables, all while keeping a close eye on the forecasts in case I need to hustle something into a warm spot or cover things. But mostly I am just enjoying the heck out of being outside more in the cooler weather. No matter how big the chores are that need to be done they suddenly seem doable with all the energy that pleasant temperatures impart. I always feel like I am getting little kiss on the cheek from Mother Nature. "Here you go." She whispers. "Now get on with it." I am ready to answer back "Yes Ma'am!"



It helps that most of our big projects are also winding up for the year. There is new space in our schedules to enjoy shorter days. More energy for gathering with family and friends, plus more dilly dallying over a cup of coffee or cocoa, or more wandering around in the beauty of a gentle season. In this season of nesting, we start to fluff and feather. This is our house-proud season. We spruce up the porches and straighten the interior. We add fall color to our gardens and put pumpkins on the porch to tell everyone we are welcoming those we love and bringing in the harvest. We do just as humans have done since we plucked the first plant and tasted it only to share our treasure with our family and friends.

As someone who loves history and finds validation in the fact that no matter how advanced our technology or science is, humans draw our sustenance from nature. We still depend on it as much as any other creature. It is that dual love of nature and history that draws me to gardening and old-fashioned ways. As I do my chores, restacking the firewood nearer the house, hauling water to the chickens, weeding around the cabbage, I think of how my grandmother and every one of my ancestral mothers before her did the same thing. I feel connected by shared experience to them through the ages. The act of completing simple but necessary chores with love, gratitude and hope for continuance of life and a bountiful future is far older than any words we use to describe them. In some ways, these basic acts serve as representatives of the distilled essence of humanity. They are not only the ways we shape nature but how we are rewarded and benefitted by it.

With that feeling of reverence for nature, connection to past and hope for the future, I embrace this season, grateful that I can face the coming cold and lingering darkness with less fear than my ancestresses. Yet even more grateful that it comes, as it always has to reset the seasons and begin the cycle again.

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## Sourcing Accurate Information

### Greg Grant

In an age of abundant information, particularly on social media and the web, the accuracy of plant knowledge is essential.

As dedicated Master Gardener Volunteer Educators, you play a pivotal role in sharing your expertise with the public, and it is crucial that the information you provide is reliable, science-based, and beneficial. In this memo, we will discuss how to evaluate the accuracy of data and information and convey this commitment to accuracy when communicating with the general public.

#### Sources of Reliable Information:

**Land Grant Universities:** University extension websites and publications, including our very own Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (and all others in the Southeast), are valuable sources for science-based horticultural information for East Texas gardeners.

**Botanical Gardens:** Trustworthy botanical gardens often provide educational resources and publications.

**Peer-Reviewed Journals:** Scholarly articles in horticultural and botanical journals are excellent for in-depth research.

**Texas Master Gardener Training:** Our training programs are based on reliable information and are continuously updated.

#### Critical Evaluation:

**Always question the source of information.** Is it from a reputable institution or expert? Does it sound “far-fetched” or too good to be true? Cross-reference information from multiple reliable sources to ensure consistency and accuracy. Be wary of anecdotal evidence or personal opinions; randomized and replicated scientific studies and experts' advice are more reliable. Use your knowledge to evaluate whether the information aligns with sound horticultural principles.

#### Conveying Accuracy to the General Public:

**Cite Sources:** When sharing information, always cite the sources you've used. This adds credibility and allows others to verify the information.

**Encourage Questions:** Welcome questions from the public and encourage them to seek reliable sources for further information.

**Be Honest:** If you're unsure about a topic, it's perfectly acceptable to say so and offer to research the question further.

**Avoid Speculation:** Resist the temptation to speculate on unfamiliar topics. It's better to admit your limits and seek answers.

**Promote Local Expertise:** Highlight the knowledge and expertise of other Smith County Master Gardeners, demonstrating your commitment to accuracy.

**Use Social Media Responsibly:** If you utilize social media, make sure to share information from reliable sources and use the platform to educate, not just to promote, share, or spread.

#### Continuing Education:

**Stay current** with horticultural research and best practices through workshops, seminars, and ongoing Texas Master Gardener training.

**Engage with local experts** and professors to expand your knowledge.

Collaborate with fellow Texas Master Gardeners to learn from their experiences and expertise.

#### Mentorship:

Support and mentor new Master Gardener volunteers to ensure that they understand the importance of accuracy and reliable information.

Your role as a Master Gardener volunteer educator is vital in promoting accurate and science-based horticultural information. By evaluating sources critically, sharing your sources when communicating with the public, and continuing your education, you contribute to the credibility of our program and ensure that our shared knowledge is of the highest quality.

Your commitment to accuracy is a testament to the integrity and value of the Texas Master Gardener program. Thank you for your dedication to fostering informed and responsible gardening practices.

Search tip: putting site:edu at the end of your search string in Google will eliminate lots of ads, blogs, etc, and return hits from universities. Putting site:tamu.edu will further limit the results to those from Texas A&M.



## REPORTS FROM THE GARDENS

### Heritage Rose Garden



Fall in the Heritage Rose Garden is a beautiful time! The roses are bursting out in bloom after the extreme heat. The cooler weather is making everyone and everything feel energized. The China Tea bed is full of blooms along with one incredible crinum what just can't stop showing off.

One highlight this month is the Aromatic Aster, also known as Fall Aster. It's a herbaceous perennial that blooms for several weeks. One day it's a big mound of dark green leaves and seemingly overnight, the entire surface is covered in purple blooms. Butterflies and other insects are attracted to it as are many birds. To make the clump even more beautiful, right next to them is a clump of Old Garden Mum 'Country Girl'. These two plants are

very complimentary side by side. Both become dormant in the winter and spread as they appear in the spring.

Our bluebonnet seeds are sprouting in large numbers. Do you know how to recognize them? Once the true leaves appear they are recognizable, but initially they have 2 large round leaves that are slightly fuzzy. Before weeding, let that first leaf appear and you will be rewarded. Once started, they should return each year if you allow them to drop seeds. Seeds should be sown September through mid-November, but the earlier, the better. As you can see, these are established by late Oct and will ride out the cold, brutal winter ready to grow again when the sun gets warmer.



*Linda Gurasich*

### Shade Garden



This issue we decided to feature a quiet specimen growing happily at the far reaches of the Shade Garden-St. Andrew's Cross. We acquired the plant at the Stephen F. Austin plant sale some years ago. It has been a surprise as, despite minimal care, it has withstood the past years' harsh temperature extremes.

*Hypericum hypericoides* is a native perennial in the St Johnswort family, Clusiaceae. It's common name refers to it's dainty yellow terminal flowers which form an oblique cross resembling that of St. Andrew the Apostle, patron saint of Scotland, Russia and Greece. Though it grows naturally in many places, in our neck of the woods, this hardy shrub can be found growing in light sandy prairies, open pine and hardwood forests, thickets, grasslands and bogs, preferring lightly acidic soils. Categorized as a subshrub, St. Andrew's Cross grows well as an understory plant, reaching approximately 3 ft in height and sprawl. It grows as an erect stem with multiple gently-spreading axillary branches bearing small linear leaves, arranged oppositely, and with it's buttery flowers floating just above the terminal pair. Older stems

shed their bark, turning a reddish brown, all in all creating a beautiful effect in a shaded woodland garden, particularly when planted en masse. Flowers eventually form small brown fruits which crack, yielding light, black seeds spread by the wind. St. Andrew's Cross blooms in our garden spring and fall, but in milder climates may bloom year round. Animals do not tend to forage on the leaves, though the bees enjoy the flowers.

Katy Barone

## IDEA Garden

### WHERE THE BOYS ARE!!

Something unique in the IDEA garden are the metal boxes placed around in the garden next to the sidewalk, filled with pamphlets on different topics relevant to gardening. BROOKS KERR has been responsible for maintaining and replenishing these boxes for many years. The pamphlet topics are composting, water conservation, crape myrtles, succulents, mulch, butterfly gardens and becoming a Smith County Master Gardener. BROOKS is also our cleanup guy: picking up, sweeping and doing other odd jobs in his usual quiet, mild mannered way!

CHRIS STEAVENSON built a new compost bin for the garden several years ago since the original one had seen better days! Most all the refuse from the weekly garden cleanup goes into those bins. So, CHRIS, with the help of DANA ANDERSON, regularly chop, turn, rotate and empty the bins in order to provide us with wonderful compost for all our beds. We even gladly share it with the green house crew for their plantings. DANA also helps Betty Atchley maintain and plant her section most every Tuesday. CHRIS is the first one to arrive at the garden on Tuesdays to open the shed, turn on fans, unlock the water, etc. Then he's the last one to leave after blowing/washing off the patio and sidewalks, 'mowing' the grass pathway and locking up!

GEORGE TEFTELLER has been in the garden for the past few years as co-section leader with his wife, Marketta. Arriving early every Tuesday, the two of them create a beautiful vista in the lower section! George has had some serious health issues this past summer and we have all missed seeing him in the garden. We are praying for his full recovery and look forward to having him back helping Marketta!

Boys like to play in the mud but I'm not sure about grown men; however, WAYNE ELLIOTT must not mind it too much! He helps us out as the 'go to' for our irrigation system. From changing out heads to replacing broken lines it's always a tough job, with lots of digging and getting wet and muddy! Bulb sale time brings him out to help with the task of digging the largest, toughest bulbs and that, too, is a muddy, backbreaking task!

Where would we be without these guys?! They do this and so much more, all working 'behind the scenes' and are invaluable to the IDEA garden with their expertise and brawn. Thank you from all of us who work in the garden! We couldn't do without you!

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BOYS!!

Laurie Graham





## November Membership Meeting

### November Monthly Meeting:

All members and interns are invited to attend our November Chapter Membership meeting with the last presentation of 2023. We will also have bulbs and used gardening books for sale at the meeting.

When: 10 a.m., November 2, 2023

Where: City of Tyler Rose Garden Center

Presentation: Texas Superstars presented by Lynette Sewell and Libby Sanson. 1 Continuing Ed credit is allowed.

### December Monthly meeting:

We will have our annual Holiday Pot Luck starting at 11 a.m. at the Tyler Rose Garden Center. Stay tuned for more to be announced at our November meeting and get those cookbooks out!

*Gail Bean*

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## Greenhouse Update

It's a busy time of year in the greenhouse. We have been propagating cuttings as much as we can before the first frost takes more tender plants into dormancy. We have propagated the ever-so-popular Cat Whiskers, Salvias, Blue Mistflower, Elderberry, Althea, and many others. I worry about those little cuttings everyday, hoping that they will root quickly before winter weather arrives. Oh, only if I had a giant plant heating pad the size of the greenhouse.

I want to thank all my SCMGs that propagate these plants. They have learned so much. Some have done it so often they don't need my instruction at all. They come in and get the supplies and get right to work. If I have taught them anything they did not know then it has all been worth it. It's very rewarding to see tiny cuttings turn into a healthy mound of flowers come summer. It's very cost effective too.

As we prepare for our first cold weather coming up in early November, let's keep our fingers crossed this winter will be a normal Texas winter. Not the new normal, but the old normal. Freezing temperatures outside the greenhouse aren't normally a big deal unless you have no electricity for days. Then it becomes a nail biter as to what will live through it all after you've worked so hard, and that's no fun. I think many of us have experienced that in the last 3 or 4 years.

Everyone get out there and take cuttings of your favorite plants you'd like to keep. You don't have to have a big greenhouse. There are some very informative Texas Agrilife articles online that tell you how to propagate from cuttings. So, always check online if you are unsure. All you really need is a sunny window sill or grow lights and patience. Happy Gardening to All.

*Debbie Taylor*



## Historian's Corner

In 2018, Wayne Elliot became president. Wayne is an entertaining speaker and his meetings were always filled with laughter. But there was serious work to be done too. Wayne and his leadership team made some important changes in how volunteer hours were mandated for the interns. This enabled the interns to get a well-rounded knowledge of the volunteer opportunities in SCMGA. Wayne's team also set up a system to have a co-coordinator for each project so that the torch could be passed to a trained project leader from year to year. Today Wayne serves on the board as Alternate State Director. He can generally be found helping in the gardens and on many projects throughout the year.

Janie Fowler became president in 2019. The VMS system was just being implemented and we all experienced growing pains. Janie's focus for the next few years was on helping folks navigate VMS and to make sure everyone had the opportunity to keep current with their certification. One very important initiative that began in 2019 was the formalization of the mentor project. With the help of team leader Heather Stephens, both mentor and intern were better served. Today Janie can be found working at pretty much every MG project, and she can often be found at the IDEA garden.

Debby Watkins followed Janie as president in 2020. Who could have guessed the challenges Covid would present just 3 months into the job. Debby and her team dealt brilliantly with the hand they were dealt moving meetings online and doing everything to keep the organization going. I would be remiss if I didn't send kudos to the entire leadership team who successfully moved the From Bulbs to Blooms project online—the sale and conference were able to be continued. Debby stated that she was continually amazed by the way the board and project leaders stepped up to the Covid challenge. Debby also began a project for teaching interns called Words of Wisdom where project leaders visit the class to educate the interns on volunteer opportunities. Debby was project leader with Henry Burch for the Heritage Garden for many years and can often be found toiling there.

Tommie Ann Grinnell

## Social Media

Many thanks to everyone who shared our From Bulbs to Blooms Facebook posts that contributed to the success of SCMGA's biggest fund raiser. I thought that once the sale was over we could all put our feet up and relax for just a little bit, but now I've learned that we're going to have "From Bulbs to Blooms Part Deux," that will run from November 13 to November 16 with pick-up at the Cotton Belt Building on Saturday, November 18. So get ready to share those posts once again.

In the meantime, as we enter the winter season, new and interesting content becomes harder to find, so if you see anything interesting, please pass it my way.

Here are the most popular posts from September:

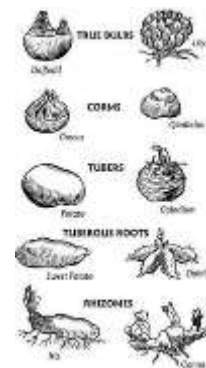
Andie Rathbone



#1 September 29  
5,388,588 people



#2 September 15  
203,422 people



#3 September 26  
176,945 people

## MASTER YOUR GARDEN – CHANNEL 19

We really appreciated our relationship with CBS 19 this past month as we were able to have two spots promoting From Bulbs To Blooms, and our reporter, Savannah Hale, also wore our B2B t-shirt for all our spots last month. We also heard from people at our B2B outdoor market about how they enjoy seeing our weekly “Master Your Garden” spots every week. And again, thanks to all of you who have stood in front of the camera and given gardening advice to the Tyler community. We now pre-record our spots at 9:30 AM on Thursdays, so no one needs to be worried about appearing on live TV. Here’s our schedule for November:

November 2	Things to Do in November	Andie Rathbone
November 9	Plant Those Seeds Now	Elizabeth Waldrup
November 16	Trees for Fall Color	Martha Fowler
November 23	THANKSGIVING – NO SPOT	
November 19	Things to Do in December	Jolana Damkroger
		Andie Rathbone

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

Tyler Morning Telegraph (Weekend only)

November 5 – Chervil – Nan Bateman

November 12 – Smart Landscape Water Use – Sylvia Masters

November 19 – Garden Gratitude – Lynn McGinnis

November 26 – Where Did All My Carrots Go? – Sara Emry-Arthur

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



Lindale News & Times (Thursdays only)\*

November 2 – Falling For Fall – Diane Lestor

November 9 – Things To Do In November – SCMGA

November 16 – Good Moth Bad Moth – Sandy Ellis

November 23 – Garden Gratitude – Lynn McGinnis

November 30 – Planting Spring Bulbs – Jim Powell

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

## Books

Thanks to everyone who assisted with books at the Bulbs to Blooms Conference and Sale. I'm sorry I missed it! We sold several books:

Fruits and Vegetables- 9

Heirloom Gardening - 10

Rose Rustler - 3

Good job!

Maggie Taliaferro



## Education Dispatch

We had a wonderful time at the Bulb Sale this year, talking with all sorts of people about their gardens, yards and problems. No one comes to the Education Table to tell us how great their garden is. Our table is a bit like the porch in Hee Haw, "gloom despair and agony on me." It's a place where we commiserate over varmints and overactive sprinkler systems drowning peoples' daffodils. That said, visitors usually leave our table with a bit more pep in their step, as we try to impart a little wisdom, and offer a figurative shoulder to cry on.

While Andie and I fielded questions and passed out handouts, Navye was our teachertainer. (Yes, I made that up) She helped the kids, who got to paint a Marker Rock as she told them about bulbs. Then she gave them their own daffodil to plant and mark with their special rock so they will know where they planted it. It was a quick, fun little project and even several "grown ups" made their own rocks towards the end of the day.

I want to thank everyone who helped us get set up and torn down and everyone who, over the last few months, has put so many long hours and thought into making our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Bulb Sale such a festive day. We do great things because you all are amazing!

Elizabeth Waldrop

## New Class and Mentor News

Applications have been received for the 31st class to train as Smith County Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Educators. The process changed this year, going to an online application through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Volunteer System, which includes a training component and the required background screening. During the application period, all interested candidates will have attended a mandatory 2-hour orientation with Smith County Extension to learn about the role of master gardener volunteer educators and what to expect during training and internship. Class 31 will begin classroom training on January 4, 2024 and continue every Thursday through March.

Heather Stephens

## Programming Committee Report

The Speakers Bureau continues to educate and promote gardening. We delivered two presentations in September. 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.

Tuesdays in the Garden delivers its last lecture on 7 November - Seasonal Floral Arrangements, Megan Lissner & Paige McGuffey of Moss Florist, in the IDEA garden beginning at noon. This is open to the public so invite your friends.

Library Lecture Series 2024 lineup is as follows: see below. Through August SB YTD: 15/garden clubs & 355 individuals TG YTD: 60 individuals LLS 2023 final: 399 individuals (if you missed any one of them, you could have been #400.)

Dale Wade

## VMS Update

Thanks for all the hard work, and MANY HOURS, that went into the ETSF, bulb sale and conference. Now.....time to get all of that into VMS...PLEASE!! We're rapidly winding down the year; all of the big projects are now over. As a reminder, for certified MGs to be recertified you must have 24 volunteer hours and 9 CEs in VMS by the end of the year. If you're having trouble entering data or if you are short on hours/CEs, please get with Elizabeth ([sevendrows87@hotmail.com](mailto:sevendrows87@hotmail.com)), Belinda ([kromerb@aol.com](mailto:kromerb@aol.com)) or Mary ([mhamlin@flash.net](mailto:mhamlin@flash.net)) and let us help.

Mary Hamlin





## From Bulbs To Blooms

Thank you, thank you, thank you!!! What an amazing day we had on Bulb Sale day!!! There was a great turnout by the Master Gardeners which made the conference and sale day run extremely smoothly. Every MG I walked by was smiling. I saw a lot of interaction with the public. Wherever there was a need, an MG would step in to handle it. It was such a pleasure for Jolana and me to work with all you amazing members. Thank you feels rather lame to express our gratitude.

We will be doing the drawing for the special surprise bulbs door prizes at the November meeting. Any MG that worked the day of the event AND signed in will be eligible for one of the bulb door prizes.

We will be having a post bulb-sale wrap up meeting on November 9th at 1 PM in the class room at the Cotton Belt Building. Everyone is welcome and invited to attend. We ask everyone to be very candid about what we could have done better, where we had hiccups, what could be done to improve B2B. Of course, we'd also like to make note of what we did well. Please come and help us continue to improve the overall functionality and efficiency of the bulb sale. We realize this bulb sale needs to continue to evolve in order to continue being a major fundraising event for SCMGA. If you cannot attend this meeting, please send Brenda an email.

As many of you have noticed and commented, we do have quite a few bulbs left over. We will have a 2nd online store that will be open from 7 AM on Monday, November 13th until 10 PM on Thursday, November 16th. Order pickup will be held from 9 AM to noon on Saturday, November 18th in the parking lot at the Cotton Belt building. Andie is going to be doing FB posts for this sale. Please be watching for them and share them far and wide to attract as many potential customers as you can!

This successful sale would not be possible without the participation of the entire membership. From the entire bulb sale committee, thank you everyone for stepping up and signing up when asked! From those who contributed hundreds of hours to those who contributed a few hours, all were necessary and valued contributions. We have such a talented, energetic, cooperative group. The combined contributions made this 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary From Bulbs to Blooms Conference and Sale the fun-filled day Lenka envisioned so many months ago. Thank you all, once again, for bringing her vision to life.

Jolana & Brenda

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## REPORT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Thursday, October 19 at The CottonBelt.

The following topics were discussed:

- Construction needs with design and estimates for IDEA Garden
- 2023 State Award Nominations for SCMGA
- Progress of 2024 Budget and Status of Bulb Sale Financials
- Planning the December membership meeting/potluck
- The importance of including population counts when recording hours in VMS
- Status of Development Committee and need for strategic plan



Belinda Kromer, Past President/Parliamentarian

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Reminder: For Master Gardeners or Interns who attended the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT) presentation on October 14 on Medicinal Plants used by Native American People presented by Ricky Linex, you get one(1) C.E. Credit since it was approved by Greg Grant and posted in our member communications.

Gail Bean

## Meet the nominees for 2024 Officers and Board of Directors!

**President—Gail Bean, Class 28, immediate past Vice President**

In my work-life, I spent over 40 years in several healthcare positions as an R.N. providing patient care to children and adults and was a founding employee of Texas Children's Health Plan where I spent the last 29 years. At the Health Plan, a Texas-based insurer serving over 500,000 Children and Women of Texas in 54 counties of southeast and east Texas, I served in several leadership positions. I moved to Tyler in 2016 to develop and lead operations in East Texas for the StarKids program for Children with Special Health Care Needs, which combined both clinical and administrative skills. My interest in gardening blossomed in college with jobs at nurseries in the Houston area. My gardening passions have evolved and currently center around using organic soil management principles, water conservation and tough Texas plants, and using native and regionally adapted plants to attract and support native pollinators, birds and other wildlife. I am a Master Naturalist, beginning birder, member of the Native Plant Society of Texas, and a member of Southern Garden History Society. I look forward to serving Smith County Master Gardeners and our community for 2024.

**Vice President—Gary Gardner, Class 29**

I grew up as the oldest of three children in a Pastor's family having lived in three different states. All the while I was interested in and planted flower gardens, a love instilled in me by my great-grandparents. In my adult life, this passion continued as a hobby aside from my many vocations. After graduating from Baylor University with a degree in Education, I taught school for a time before leaving education and becoming President and General Manager of West Lumber Company of West and JB Realty (a rental property company) owned by my wife's family in West, Texas. I learned to perform routine maintenance on those properties. Those skills would prove to be invaluable later in life. During my thirty-plus years in West, I was active in church as well as civic organizations. In church I served as Deacon, organist and pianist, and chaired many committees including Finance, Nominating, and Properties to name a few. My Civic Duties included serving on the Board of Trustees for the West Independent School District, as President of the West Chamber of Commerce, on the Board of Directors for the annual Czech festival Westfest and Founding Member and Past President of the Cen-Tex Orchid Society in Waco. Since leaving West, I have continued to substitute teach, worked on a Wildlife Conservation Ranch, and more recently managed an Ace Hardware store in Houston and served as a handy man for my many customers. Four years ago, I retired and purchased a small place on Lake Palestine with a yard that was a blank canvas. At present, I quench my artistic thirst by sculpting and painting on that canvas. That canvas is, however, not so blank anymore. I am interested in growing and promoting native plants in my gardening life.

**Secretary—Ann Hooks, Class 29**

I grew up in Dallas, then came to TJC, where my family and I fell in love with East Texas. It took me a while to get back (via McAllen, Memphis, Houston, and Oklahoma) but Tyler is now my home. I have a varied work history, but most of it comes down to two divisions: Sales Representative (grocery industry, radio advertising, interior décor) and Administrative Assistant. My interests include art and crafts, Texas history, and interior decorating. I have always had a love for "dirt therapy", but, with Master Gardeners, I've found an elevated level of curiosity and satisfaction in putting all the "puzzle pieces" together. My new favorite project is the Goodman Museum landscape. I am a widow, mother of four, with twelve grandchildren, two great-grandsons, and a multitude of granddogs and grandcats. I look forward to working with the leadership of Smith County Master Gardeners!

**Treasurer—Sara Emry-Arthur, class 28-returning and immediate past Assistant Treasurer**

**Assistant Treasurer—Colleen Huntsberger, class 28**

Working part time at Montgomery Wards during high school and college was the beginning of a 40 year career in retail. When they say "find a job you love and you'll never work a day in your life" it's true!! After college I was hired by Dillard's into their Executive training program and retired as a Corporate VP of Product Development and Design. My many positions at Dillard's allowed me to travel all over the world with a team of Designers and Buyers to develop products for our stores. The skills I developed over the years are broad, but my strengths are administrative, organizational and financial. I never had time for gardening or any other hobbies, but started piddling in the yard after I re-

tired and moved to Tyler. My true love of gardening began when I met my husband in 2011. City girl married Country boy. The first thing we did was build raised bed gardens and planted vegetables. That first year we had so many tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers that we started canning and haven't stopped. While we were all locked down for Covid I started looking into the Master Gardener program. My first love will always be vegetables, but having 10 acres has forced me to learn about grass and soil management. My next major project will be using part of our pasture land for a Pocket Prairie. What a blessing it's been to be part of this organization and it will be an honor and privilege to serve on the Board in 2024.

Parliamentarian—Elizabeth Waldrop and immediate past President, class 24

I am a graduate of the University of Texas at Tyler with a bachelor's degree in History and concentrations in Political Science and Philosophy.

I worked for Caldwell Zoo from 1989 till 2001

Southside Bank from 2001 to 2008

and The Hospice of East Texas from 2008 to 2015

I became a Master Gardener in 2016 as part of Smith County's Class 24.

I have been the Leader of Education for the program since 2019 and I have served on the Board of Directors since 2021.

I have coordinated the succulent section of the IDEA Garden within the Tyler Botanical Garden since 2018.

As a lifelong East Texan, I have played in the dirt here for my entire life. I feel so fortunate to live in this wonderful area with such amazing biodiversity and a climate that supports a huge variety of plants, pollinators, plus bird and animal life.

Historian—Marybeth McCown, Class 27, the first COVID class

In 2019, we packed up 43 potted plants out of that thin topsoil and amended beds of North Austin to be welcomed by the red clays of North Tyler. Getting right into the Master Gardener program that year, I shared gardening experiences with people who have gardened in East Texas for years. My educational background, graduate school level research skills and curiosity about the world of nature set me up to enjoy tackling Greg's teaching. The fact that I taught most of my career years at the middle school level prepared me to enjoy all kinds of personalities--even Greg's.

My family heritage is rooted in Coldwater, Mississippi--a very small town near where Elvis was born. I did not even know the word horticulture! But I experienced it. I ate fresh and canned food harvested from shared gardens. Every season we picked wild muscadines from local woods, scuppernongs from a trellis in the yard as well as big, fat blackberries. Dad grew and I picked strawberries every late spring afternoon after school.

After marriage I left the south for Austin, Texas where we lived all our married lives except for 12 years when we moved to Guatemala. Our two sons were born there. As a result of this cross-cultural experience, I can speak more than deep South drawl.

I have saved journals and photos and letters and memorabilia from most of the eras of my life. So, as your historian next year, I am looking forward to exploring the past and recording 2024 events for our association with Gail Bean at the helm.

Chief Technology Officer (CTO)—Lynn McGinnis, Class 27

I'm relatively new to the organization but I've served as the Communication/Technology officer for two (2) years now. I graduated in SCMGA Class 27 in 2021. I was raised in Troup, Texas. My husband Bill and I moved to Tyler in 1986. My garden interests really started when I retired 7 years ago. I worked for Smith County as a Court Administrator/Probate Auditor for over 35 years. I love animals, but especially my little French bulldog "Beaux." I volunteered with Therapeutic Animal Assisted Therapy for over 26 years and served on their board for 8 years, then I was appointed Executive Director for 2 years. I'm still learning all this gardening stuff and I've found the amazing folks in this organization possess an enormous amount of information, so I try to pick their brains every chance I get!

Board Member At-Large—Brenda Strong, 1998, Virginia

In my former life, I was a process controls engineer for BP in Alaska. We moved to a farm in Virginia (think Green Acres!) while commuting to work in Alaska on a 2 week on / 2 week off basis. Two more full-time jobs got added to my responsibilities making me one very stressed-out and exhausted person. I was fortunate to be able to quit that job before it made me ill or killed me. Through the years of commuting, I'd already started gardening in Virginia, reading the Virginia Gardener magazine and talking with long-time gardeners. Upon quitting corporate work, I immediately signed up for the Mas-



ter Gardener class in 1998. Over the years my vegetable garden became huge, specializing in tomatoes (4-6 dozen plants & 15-20 varieties) and peppers (2-4 dozen plants & 10-20 varieties). Most of the summer was spent picking and canning vegetables. Tending my many perennial beds took up the other seasons. Having so much free time on my hands, I also worked at a local, family-owned greenhouse for 11 years. In amongst all of that, I also studied Reiki and started my own business providing Reiki sessions and animal communication. After 23 years of building up so much gardening work, we decided we needed a change, somewhere I wouldn't be a slave to my garden. Because of a friend, we chose to move to Tyler. Within a few months, my Reiki business was established and expanded to teaching and I'd joined SCMGA. I quickly gravitated to working in the IDEA garden. Fast forward 8 years – I've added hypnotherapy to my business. I now have to admit, I have an addiction – an addiction to gardening! Moving didn't cure me, but I am more selective in my vice. My current focus is adding more trees to our yard, using drought-tolerant shrubs, perennials and bulbs and keeping any high maintenance plants in the area around the pool.

State Director—Wayne Elliott, returning and immediate past Alternate Director, class 22

I grew up on a cattle ranch. I attended LSU majoring in Animal Science. Upon graduation I entered the US Army serving as an Airborne Ranger Infantry Officer. I served two tours in Vietnam, two in Korea, one in Germany, and one in Italy. After 20 years in the Army, I retired and went to work on the "Wild Side of Life" working as a Public Middle School Guidance Counselor. After fifteen years my wife (52 years now) and I went to Chad, Africa as Missionaries to build a hospital. When we were kicked out of Chad, we went to Turkey for 8 years. We retired to Tyler in 2014. I am currently serving as a Deacon at Sylvania Baptist Church.

State Director—Luci Morgan, returning and immediate past Alternate Director, class 26

Alternate Director—Ruth York, class 29

Third child of seven, I grew up in Tyler just one block from where my husband & I have lived for 36 years on South Chilton. I love our Brick Street District. To say I have deep roots in Tyler would be an accurate statement. I have a BS in Psychology from Texas A&M University which I used to little avail as a counselor for emotionally disturbed girls at a Wilderness Camp for a couple of years. I've been a waitress, a rubber stamp maker, a bookkeeper, a secretary, a house cleaner, an assistant store manager, a tech department manager, and probably some other jobs I've forgotten.

Fast forward 3 children and 45 years of marriage later – and I find myself retired but still enjoying working part-time as a CPA for ESC Region 7. I live with my very talented (artist & musician) husband, Randy York. We are crazy enough to visit Canada in the winter (think 30 below) to visit two of our children who live there.

Alternate Director—Tom Cox, class 29

Tyler is my home town. I attended all twelve years of public school in Whitehouse (my mother taught there and transferred me there as a first grader). After graduation I went to TJC for one year to take basic required courses, and after that, transferred to the University of Texas, Austin, and majored in Architecture. After graduating from architecture school I worked for the architectural office of Dahl, Braden, Chapman in downtown Dallas. After one and a half years I decided to transition into education. For thirty-two years, I taught architecture at the Skyline Career Development Center. The class was part of a four-year program for high school students, from across Dallas, interested in pursuing careers in architecture. The program won commendations from the Dallas American Institute of Architects and the Texas Society of Architects. I received a presidential citation for teaching from the Texas Society of Architects, teaching commendations from the Dallas American Institute of Architects, and was Dallas High School Teacher of the Year in 2003 and retired in 2012. The Covid shutdown of 2020 brought me back to my childhood home in Tyler. Time spent outdoors was an antidote to Covid isolation and a catalyst to pursue gardening. My ancestors were farmers. I didn't acquire their farming know how. The land they worked is now covered with native plants. My entry point into gardening has been two pronged. I have concentrated on learning about growing a garden for food and also learning about the native plants in the uncultivated fields on my ancestor's land, the ecosystems those plants support, and how those plants can be used in urban landscapes.

# November 2023

## Smith County Master Gardeners

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Shade Garden workday 9:00	2 SCMGA Meeting Rose Center 10:00 AM  New Class Orientation 1:00	3	4 Shade Garden workday 8:30
5  FALL BACK	6	7 HRG/IDEA Workday 9:00 ELECTION DAY  NOVEMBER 7, 2023 Tuesday in the Garden talk noon	8 Shade Garden workday 9:00	9 B2B WrapUp 1:00	10 Office Closed	11 VETERANS DAY  — For the brave — ★ ★ ★
12  Diwali Festival of Lights	13	14 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00	15 Shade Garden workday 9:00	16 SCMG BOD Cotton Belt 10:00	17	18 Shade Garden workday 8:30  BulbSale #2 Pickup day 9:00
19	20	21 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00	22	23 Office Closed 	24 Office Closed	25 Grapevine deadline
26	27	28 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00	29 Shade Garden workday 9:00	30		