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

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Elizabeth's Thoughts

February is a strange month. I often find it uplifting and frustrat-
ing at the same time. This is the identical relationship I have with
gardening and for exactly the same reasons, the weather! As I
walk through the pastures around my property, I am cheered by
every dandelion nurturing a chilled bee with its sunny fluffy cush-
ion-like flower. I thrill over the tiny wild violets and bluets poking
through the dead brown grass. I am so happy to see new life I
even appreciate the sturdy wild onions crunching under my boots
which are reeking a sappy onion powder scent by the time I get to
the porch. These are the best days of February. The sun is bright
though thin and weak and I enjoy our mild winter outside soaking up vitamin D like a
lizard basking on a rock.



Then there are the other days of February. When I spend all day going back and forth
to the wood pile constantly stoking a fire. My hands and face are chapped by gale force
winds and it is as stormy and petulant as teen angst. Those are days I stare through the
fogged glass of my greenhouse hoping the heaters are working but afraid to open the
doors. The days that my chickens glare at me furiously when I walk in their warm coop
bringing the wind in behind me. The days no amount of rocks will hold down my frost
cloth and hoop tunnel covers.

As with all things, the contrast between the dark and the light, the cold and the warm,
dead grass and the stinky but cheerful wild onions that makes us see everything more
clearly, appreciating the small stuff. So, this February I am preparing myself early. I am
still going to be grateful for the tiny sturdy pasture flowers doing their best to survive
the last throes of winter. But I am also going to try to enjoy the cold, dark, stormy days
too. I am going to remember they are precious chilling hours that bring on the summer
fruits of peaches and plums. The rain is badly needed to refill our reservoirs that
suffered last year's drought. And finally, though I am not going to even pretend I like it,
I will try not to be mad at the wind. Mainly because wind doesn't care what I think and
I have other things that I can do something about.

Those things include many Master Gardener projects. We are planning this year's
events and committees are up and going strong. We are getting ready for an Education-
al Trip to King's Nursery in Teneha for March. We are handling Background Checks to
complete our obligations to the State Master Gardener Association, keeping our Charter
in good standing. I am not going to say this is going to be a great February, three La
Nina's, Uri, a drought and Covid broke me from prognosticating, but I have a good feel-
ing about it. I decided I would.

E Waldrop

Please don't forget our new meeting time—10:00 AM!



Spring Greg Grant

From all indications it looks like it will be an earlier than normal spring. After all, as I write this in late January, native spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) is already blooming along with buttercups (*Ranunculus fascicularis*) and trident red maple (*Acer rubrum trilobum*). I even saw a red buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*) fully leafed out and in bud yesterday in my woods. I also have the first blooms on my jonquils (*Narcissus jonquilla*), lent lilies (*Narcissus pseudo-narcissus*), and Grand Primo narcissus (*Narcissus tazetta* 'Grand Primo') which all typically bloom in February. I've also planted some Legend onion sets and will purchase seed potatoes this week to plant in mid-February. Of course, this doesn't mean that a late hard freeze won't come along and shut down the garden party.

My PhD work is at a critical juncture as I have to do copious literature review, submit a research proposal, and defend it this semester. It's all harder when you are only on campus once a week or less and your major professor is busy and elusive. Bottom line: Every time you see me, prod me to get moving on my proposal! I hope to do research involving Texas Master Gardener motivation, training, and volunteerism but it will all have to be sorted out and approved by my committee which involves a forest resource interpreter, a horticulturist, an ag educator, and a social scientist/statistician.

Here's what my spring semester looks like: Mondays will start with office conference at the Cotton Belt and then work on submitting a news column and image to the Tyler Morning Telegraph for my weekly Sunday garden column. I love writing, but there's never a day of my life that I'm not late finishing up an article, jotting notes for future articles, starting a new article, taking photos for future articles, or sorting and labeling photos for articles.

Tuesday mornings will generally find me at the Heritage

Rose Garden working with our dedicated volunteer group there. It sounds like we will be getting a new covered pavilion and benches where the old one used to be, courtesy of the Gertrude Windsor Garden Club who first started the Heritage Rose Garden. Most Tuesday afternoons I'll be in my office tackling paper-work.

Wednesdays this semester will find me at the SFA Library doing literature review or chasing committee members around campus. I try to bring my bike with me since parking is an issue there. I suppose you heard that SFA is to become part of the UT system. I was hoping for TAMU, but SFA needs more money than what I'm paying them and UT offered up the most to them.

Thursdays are my 2023 Smith County Master Gardener intern class all day at the Cotton Belt classroom. We've got a full class of enthusiastic question askers this year. Please help me educate and train them.

Friday mornings begin in the Kissam Intermediate School garden making notes and suggestions for the wonderful teacher there. If you'd like to volunteer with the Learn, Grow, Eat, Go program there contact the teacher Jackie Flach or our BLT (Better Living for Texans) agent Erica Davis. Currently, I need three old planters removed so I can plant three different cultivars of pear trees for them ASAP.

Also, as a reminder, I spend more than three hours in the car each day unable to access texts or emails, so always cc Amanda on any correspondence and realize that those from early morning or late afternoon may get buried by others since I get around 100 questions a week via two phone numbers, three emails, and three Facebook pages.

February Membership Meeting

Please mark your calendars for February 2, 2023 10 A.M.

The educational topic will be: Begonias: types and sustainability Taddie Hamilton, Tarrant County Master Gardener, and Don Miller, both members of Southwest Begonia Society, are enthusiastic Begonia lovers. The topic is Begonias: showing us types of each with examples, caring for them and applying the most appropriate sustainability principles for our hot summers and cold winters. The plants they bring as examples will be given as door prizes to attendees.

Gail Bean

REPORTS FROM THE GARDENS

Heritage Rose Garden

The Heritage Rose Garden is doing what it needs to do this time of year. Most things are dormant and looking pretty sad, thanks to the ONE night of 10 degree weather! Moving from 70 degrees to a deep freeze so quickly isn't what these plants were hoping for. But, most will survive and the damage will be apparent in a couple of months. We are only cutting back the dead wood on the roses until we see where the new growth begins. The perennials have all been cut back to the ground level.

We have been working on the long rectangular bed to make sure the roses are the highlight. That means removing the perennials. They would like to take over. We seeded poppies, bluebonnets and larkspur in early November. Many had sprouted and they took a hit as well but more are coming up. Greg explained that the ones that spouted in the late fall would have been stronger and a better crop. The ones spouting now will bloom later and won't be as strong.

He spent time with us pointing out the new seedlings so that we would recognize them and be able to remove the weeds, which are doing very well!

Linda Gurasich

Shade Garden

The Shade Garden was busy in January. A stellar crew of Master Gardeners worked over a period of 2 long days to flesh out a 100' long by 4-5' wide granite path in the new Woodland Walk. Thankfully, the Rose Garden Complex superintendent let us use their front end loader, which was a life saver! The hard work paid off. The walk is beautiful. There are some run-off issues to work out, though we have a plan and hope to have them ironed out soon. Installation of boulders is in the works, along with a lovely bench. More about that is to come. In other news, four beautiful maples have been donated by Liz Wiley and planted in honor of her late husband. A couple of Chalk Maples will be added soon. We are thrilled, honored and grateful to Liz for her generosity.

Katy Barone

IDEA Garden

One of the most colorful evergreen shrubs, Nandina 'Firepower' (Nandina Domestica) is located in the center section of the IDEA Garden. If many of you are like me, when I hear the word Nandina my thoughts go back to the old fashioned invasive variety that grew in my mother's and grandmother's yards. Nandina 'Firepower' has certainly changed my way of thinking when it comes to Nandinas.

Nandina 'Firepower' definitely lives up to its name from the colorful effect that this shrub brings to our garden all year long. In spring through late summer, its foliage turns from light green to a bright yellow. As the cooler temperatures of late fall and winter approach, the foliage turns to bright red and holds that color most of winter. This particular variety does not produce fruit.

This compact broad-leaved evergreen can be planted in partial or full sun. It is a low growing shrub, reaching 2 feet in height and equally as wide. The shrub requires little maintenance and grows best when you let it grow to its natural form.

Nandina 'Firepower' is a radiant addition to the IDEA Garden at this time of the year. It is really showing off its winter beauty!

Janie Fowler



REPORT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING January 19



The February 2023 Board of Directors Meeting was held in person at the Cotton Belt. Items discussed were:

- Treasurer's Report
 - Status of Account
 - Status of 2023 Member Dues
- New project approval for Garden Guides to be completed by Monday, January 23rd
- Elizabeth's New Year - New BOD meeting procedures for 2023
- Development Committee expectations from the BOD
- Announcement by Gail Bean for 2023 SCMGA Bus Trip for Education Outing March 15th to King's Nursery and lunch in Carthage
 - Details to be included weekly eBlast
 - Signup Genius for registration
- Discussed and agreed on 2023 Intern hour requirements (after Greg's blessings)
- Greg's Comments limited as he was attending the annual Texas Association of Botanic Gardens and Arboreta meeting in Houston
- Member comments
 - Discussed interest in creating a Keyhole Garden for our members and for teaching

Belinda Kromer, Past President/Parliamentarian

Historian's Corner

"Congratulations on being named historian for the SCMG board. Now tell me again what you will actually do?" This was the very question I asked for myself before accepting the nomination.

In an effort to answer this question, I began going through the past yearbooks carefully compiled by the Historians that have come before me. That is when the magnitude of the accomplishments of SCMG became apparent. From a first class of 13, thirty years later we have 127 active, 24 interns and 20 life time Master Gardeners. And this doesn't even include our new class!

Thirty years ago, Keith Hansen, Smith County extension horticulturist, sought out people interested in learning more about the Texas Master Gardener program. Sue Adey led as president for the first two years for SCMG. The accomplishments and contributions of our organization could have not been predicted by the pioneer first class.

Within the first five years, SCMG partnered with community members to beautify the city. The very first Grapevine newsletter was written as well as the weekly newspaper article written by our members. The Heritage Garden was upgraded, SCMG helped with plant trials at Overton and our first calendars were published.

As we celebrate this 30th anniversary of SCMG, let us remember those hard-working members who came before us, many of them still active, who made all of our projects of today possible. And send those photos of activities that you participate in throughout the year to tgrinnell5@gmail.com. You can be a part of the historical record as well.

Tommie Ann Grinnell

Tech Committee



Our Tech committee met on January 20th.

The focus of our first meeting of 2023 was to discuss our plan for the year and to evaluate the 2022 plan.

We have a lot of really cool stuff happening this year: In addition to producing the Library Series videos, we're producing several other videos (so stay tuned!). We're establishing a photo storage procedure, and we hope to utilize our current technology more efficiently.

With that said, if you are slightly tech savvy or even very tech savvy, we'd love to have you on our committee. If you're interested, please contact me lynnmac@suddenlink.net.

Lynn McGinnis

HELP DESK UPDATE

We've had quite a variety of inquiries over the past month, so plenty of opportunity for our volunteers to learn! Starting the year off slowly, there were intermittent questions about pruning trees and saving freeze damaged boxwoods and azaleas. AgriLife had a good online article about being patient, so we saved it as a PDF and have been sending out "Learn to Live With Ugly" (['Learn To Live With Ugly' After Freeze Damage - Texas A&M Today \(tamu.edu\)](https://www.tamu.edu/agrilife/learn-to-live-with-ugly-after-freeze-damage)).

Folks are clearly planning their Spring plantings, as we have had many inquiries about the best varieties to plant—blueberries, garlic, sugarcane, etc. Thankfully we have very good documentation available to send out, as both Keith and Greg have compiled it.

One of the more unusual requests involved identifying the best variety of Pine tree for Leon County! Thank you, Texas Forest Service for your excellent publications!

If you've had the training, think about signing up for a shift—or two. We never have a dull moment.

Mary Jo

[SCMG: HelpDesk \(signupgenius.com\)](https://www.scmga.org/helpdesk)

Greenhouse Update

The SCMGA Greenhouse is going strong as of yesterday's meeting. We have tiny seedlings popping up in lots of our flats. We started 2 types of heirloom tomatoes, several varieties of regular tomatoes along with lots of herbs and flowers. The tomato crops should follow along the 6-8 week germination dates for planting in late March early April. That being said, as always, everything depends on the weather.

We are making our own seed potting mix this year. Prices have risen to the point that it is more economical to do that since we use so much. Our mixture is sphagnum moss, vermiculite, perlite and a little dash of compost. You can find the recipe and measurements online if you are interested in starting seeds in a soilless mix. Many of our plants that we propagated early in the greenhouse year have nicely rooted. Some are ready to be moved into larger pots. Although we did take a hit from the single digit temps we had a few weeks back, lots of the little plants are putting on new growth slowly. It is so gratifying when you put in the time and effort to take cuttings, see them root and grow into plants. There is no better gift to share than a beautiful plant that you worked so hard to grow for sharing.



I always like to acknowledge the wonderful folks who come to work in the greenhouse. They are hardworking and eager gardeners for sure. I have been gardening diligently for 35 years now and am happy to show them what I have learned through the years. It's always a treat to have someone come in and show us new methods or share new plants to propagate. If anyone has anything you would like to share please come join us and educate us. We would love to have you and your ideas.

Happy Gardening to all!

Debbie Taylor

Education Dispatch

I want to thank Dan Gerber for teaching us how to sharpen tools in January. We all learned so much and had a great time practicing our skills. If anyone else wants to teach a class on how to do some garden chore, build something or maintain something that would help gardeners please shoot me an email or text I would love to talk to you about it. And you crafters and artists out there, if you have a fun garden project you love to do, we want to hear from you too.

I also want to pat Brenda Clark, Wayne Elliott, and Gail Bean for braving the cold wind and sprinkles to represent SCMGA at the Arbor Day event. We had fun and talked to lots of folks about trees. We did so good, we got invited to two more events with the Park and Rec — one for Earth Day in April and one for Pollinator Day in June, our dance card is getting full! If anyone is interested in those two projects please let me know, both of those events will have a children's activity component so we need our wonderful kid friendly volunteers as well as folks to man our educational table.

Elizabeth Waldrop

EXTRA EXTRA READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!!

Tyler Morning Telegraph (Sundays only)

February 5 – “Four O’clock Flowers” – Mary Post
February 12 – “Why Color and Flowers Make Us Happy” – Mary Bonrepos
February 19 – “Plant, Pets, Precautions” – Paul Wick
February 26 – “Texas Superstar Spotlight - Trees” – Libby Sanson

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



Lindale News & Times (Thursdays only)*

February 2 – “Feed the Birds” – Holly Hollenshead
February 9 – “Winter Garden” – Shelia Preddy
February 16 – “Tobacco, There is Something Good” – Ginger Sawyer
February 23 – “Benefits of Gardening for Children” – BJ Moore

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

Calendar Committee Update

It's time to start thinking about the 2024 calendar. I would like to have ideas of what you would like to see in our next calendar. Send me your great ideas. Our first meeting will be in March and we will be deciding our theme. I will be sending the meeting date in a few weeks. Would love to have everyone attend and help make another amazing calendar.

Sherri Matthews

VMS Update

Congratulations to us ALL!! 2022 was a record breaking year with 15,318 volunteer hours and 2,509 CEs. At \$29.95 per volunteer hour, this equates to a \$458,774 contribution to TA&M AgriLife! The previous best year was 2021 with 12,479 hours. We smashed the old record and set a high-bar new one! Let's see if we can do it again, so get to work and then get those hours into VMS!

Mary Hamlin

New Class and Mentor News

Class 30 is well underway with 26 enthusiastic students, who will graduate to internship on April 6th. Many thanks to all who stepped up to be Mentors for this class. Mentor Training will take place on February 6th from 9-11 in the Extension classroom. Mentors will meet their future Interns on the final class day, March 30th, at a pot luck lunch in the classroom, hosted by the Teaching Assistants and Mentors. More information about March 30th in the days and weeks to come.

Heather Stephens

2023 SCMGA Educational Event

King Nursery is a designated Texas Superstar nursery. Texas SuperStar plants are grown and sold at the nursery. Smith County Master Gardeners will visit the nursery on March 15, 2023 leaving Tyler at 9:00 a.m. and returning at approximately 3 p.m. The owner of this nursery, Andrew King, will provide tour and educational presentation to Smith County Master Gardeners at the nursery regarding regionally appropriate Texas tough superstar designated plants for use in area gardens and landscapes.

The group will travel by bus to the nursery for the presentation and nursery tour. Private vehicles will be available to bring plants back for members. After the tour, we will travel into Carthage TX for lunch at the Texas Tea Room on the square before returning to Tyler.

Background: King's Nursery was established in 1915 in Teneha, Texas. For over 100 years new ideas have shifted and changed the nursery, but the loyalty and service shown to their customers has remained the

same. King's Nursery has had a longstanding relationship with SFA Gardens, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, and the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association. For generations now, the goal of the nursery has been horticultural education and innovation.

Andrew King, fourth generation owner of King's Nursery, will provide an educational tour of this historical nursery. Andrew earned a PhD in Horticulture from Texas A&M University where he served on the faculty in the Department of Horticultural Sciences for 5 years.

Costs: The cost of the bus will be divided among the passengers minus \$400.00 that will be contributed by SCMGA, so the fuller the bus, the cheaper the ride will be. Everyone will be expected to buy their own lunch. If you are interested, please use SignupGenius to sign up for our SCMGA trip by following the link below. Please plan to join us for this fun and educational activity!

Gail Bean

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054DA5AE2AAAF94-iminterested>

From Bulbs To Blooms

From Bulbs to Blooms is bumping along into spring! I have bloomin' bulbs, do you? Do you have LOTS of something you'd like us to dig for you? We promise to leave you all the biggest and lots of babies besides (unless you want us to take more). Please keep looking for those spectacular blooms that might be ready to harvest, snap some shots and note the address; send that info off to Anne Pattullo (gpattullo@suddenlink.net), Martha Fowler (brooksf@aol.com), Jolana Damkroger (hoxieanne@hotmail.com), or Lenka Johnson (lenka_7@msn.com). We will talk to the property owner before we dig anything and everything we dig must first be identified conclusively by Greg.



If you don't have bulbs, get some - maybe pick up a few nice perennials, too - by going to bloominbucks.com and choosing "Smith County Master Gardener" from the drop-down list and tap "GO". You won't be able to use discounts on your purchase, but SCMG will get 25%.

Still looking for a few good people to join our committee - we'd love it if you'd send what your interests and/or skills are when you reach out! We always need people with numbers and technology skills, but artists/craftspeople/regular folks, too. We have short-term, dip-your-toe-in jobs and big monster ones - something for everyone.

Call/text Jolana @ 785.226.1898 and Lenka @ 970.215.2988. (E-mail addresses above.)

Lenka Johnson

Social Media

It was great to meet the new class this month & talk about what we're doing with social media. Things are starting to gear up after the holidays and we're promoting our upcoming events like the library lecture series and the home garden tour. As you see these posts, please share them to your own feed. This spreads the words since everyone has their own list of friends that is different from other people. We especially want good attendance at the Garden Tour this year, so when you see posts about it, make sure to spread the word.

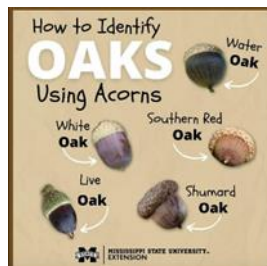
Also, if you're at home at lunchtime on Thursdays, tune into the Channel 19 noon news show and watch our "Master You Garden" segments that come on about 12:15 PM. This coming month we will be talking about the following:

February 2	Things to do in February
February 9	Feeding Birds in Your Garden
February 16	Master Gardeners at the Library
February 23	Pruning Roses

To see the library of the segments we've done so far, go to our web site & click on "What's New". Here are the top Facebook posts in December:



December 4
"Searching for Balance,"
Dan Gerber
31,896 people reached



December 15
15,366 people reached

Andie Rathbone



December 20
6,636 people reached

Programming Committee Report

January saw the inaugural Library Lecture Series featuring Dr. Andrew King of King's Nursery in Tenaha. If you missed it, go [here](#). We hosted 135 folks. You should plan to attend the upcoming Lecture. Our own Master Gardener colleague Andie Rathbone will help us "Prep Now for a Beautiful Garden Later." That is on Friday, 17 February at 11:30 AM in the Taylor Auditorium of the Tyler Public Library.

The Speakers Bureau gave three presentations in January. Becky and Dale Wade spoke to 22 women of the Ladies Azalea Garden Club on pruning roses. They met with the Troup Womens Civic Organization to provide 23 members info on getting the garden spring ready. Debbie Watkins shared with 10 folks of the Green Acres Garden Club the "allure of roses."

Please email Becky or Dale Wade should you speak to any group so that they can capture the details. If you want to be a part of the Speakers Bureau, let them know. They are always looking for MGs to share their know-how to the community.

Dale & Becky Wade

Development Update

The development committee had the first, of hopefully many, town hall meetings this month. The amount of ideas and the passion each person had for their projects was humbling and amazing. One of the greatest parts of being in SCMG, for me, is how much every volunteer cares about the organization and the projects we are running through it. So a big thank you to everyone who came and let their voice be heard, I am super excited to keep hearing your ideas and working with you to implement them!



With that being said, a committee of one is not a very effective committee, Development is needing a co-chair. Ultimately what's most important is that your heart is in it, but having previous fundraising, marketing, and/or event planning is a big plus. Some of the duties will include;

- Working 1-on-1 with Project Leaders
- Maintaining a running list of companies and individuals to ask for donations/sponsorships
- Assist with fundraising efforts for the organization as a whole, and individual fundraising events
- Maintaining documentation that is used for fundraising efforts
- Have fun

Please email me at s.osborn544@gmail.com if you have questions, ideas, opportunities or if you just want to chat. I am also interested in additional committee members as well, each of you has an incredibly valuable skill set and I would love to have you serve in the committee if it sounds like something you are passionate about. The more of us that work together, the more that we can accomplish for SCMGA.

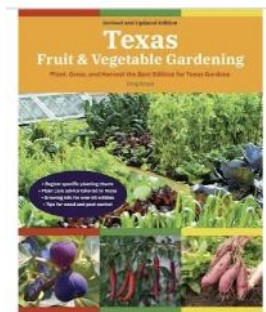
Stephanie Osborn

Books Update

Read a Good Book Lately?

Our very own Greg Grant has written or co-authored three books that we plan to have available at many of the SCMGA events this year:

Rose Rustler
Heirloom Gardening in the South
Texas Fruit and Vegetable Gardening



These books were at the Fruit, Nut and Vegetable conference and also at the January Library Series and sales have been good. We plan to have them available at the remaining Library Series lectures as well as at educational events as they come up. If you are interested in any of these great books, or if you have friends or neighbors who would like to make one (or all three!) part of their gardening resource library, please pass along the word to be looking for them. Proceeds go towards funding various SCMGA projects and activities.

Please contact Maggie Taliaferro – 903-309-0265 or Maggie.taliaferro@gmail.com with any questions.

Maggie Taliaferro

February 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 Mentor Meeting 9:00 AM	7 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM	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	16 Class 30 Meets 9:00 SCMG BOD Cotton Belt 10:00	17 make kindness the norm.	18 Shade Garden workday 8:30 AM
19	20  Office Closed	21 HRG/IDEA Garden Work- day 9:00 AM 	22 Shade Garden workday 9:00	23 Class 30 Meets 9:00 Grapevine deadline	24	25
26	27	28				