

Sharecropper

Tarrant County Master Gardener Association

Mission Statement

To provide horticultural and environmental research based information and techniques. To volunteer in area horticulture projects.



DECEMBER 2009 IN THIS ISSUE

Deck the Halls	1
MGs in Action	2
Leadership	3
Project Profile	3
President's Message	4
Monthly Program	4
How to Print	4
Minutes	5
Hospitality	5
Superstar MG Profile	6
Calendar & Events	8-9
Announcements	9
Entomology Specialist	10
Field Trip Report	11
Committee Profiles	12-13
Birthdays	14
Directory Updates	14
Meet Billie Hammack	14
Volunteer Opportunities	15
This Month's Events	Back

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Articles welcome
and encouraged.

Send submissions to
tmgmarilyn@gmail.com



DECK THE HALLS WITH HOLIDAY HERBS

by Susan Wittig Albert, Author of the China Bayles Mysteries

With the holidays coming up, it is almost time to think about cooking those festive holiday foods, and putting up the decorations the whole family loves. Texans who grow their own herbs (or harvest a few plants from a neighbor's garden) can enjoy a special celebration at the Christmas season, for many of the plants which flourish in our yards and gardens have played an important role in many holiday traditions, from our American Thanksgiving to the ancient Yule.

The Holly and the Ivy -- Mistletoe, too!



Christmas decorations can be traced to a Roman custom of sending a gift of boughs to friends during the festival of the Saturnalia, held in the middle of December to celebrate the winter solstice. The Druids, too, brought boughs into their homes -- specifically holly, intertwined with evergreen ivy -- an invitation to the spirits of nature to share their fire-warmed homes during the harsh winter. Early Christians adopted the pagan practice of bringing boughs indoors at Christmas. Because of its symbolism, holly was one of the favorites. An early legend says that the holly first sprang up in the footprints of Christ, and its thorny leaves and scarlet berries have been thought to symbolize Christ's sacrifice.



Our Texas native holly (*Ilex opaca*) grows best in the piney woods of East Texas, but with extra watering, it should do well elsewhere. The Druids probably wouldn't recognize our native Yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*), but its red berries make it a wonderful addition to holiday garlands. You've never thought of holly as an herb? For centuries, it has had several important medicinal uses, particularly in the treatment of pleurisy and rheumatism.

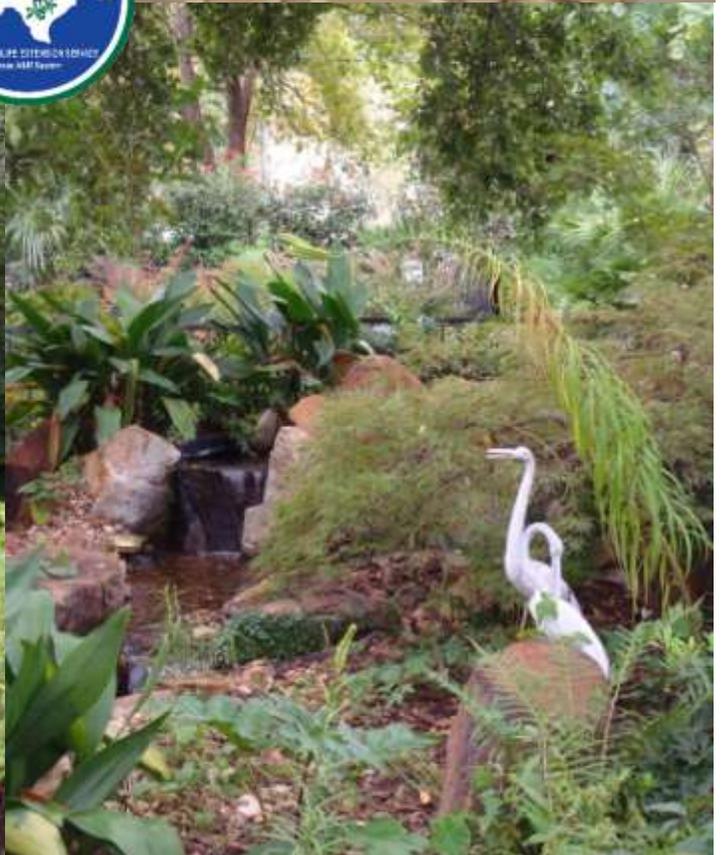
Ivy, too, is an herb that is associated with the festive season. Twined with sprigs of holly and branches of fir, it makes a beautiful wreath. Ivy was once used medicinally; an elev-

(Fall Planting Continued on page 7)

MGs in ACTION

Photos from the Garden Conservancy Tour

Photos by Carla Pickens



Photos by Carla Pickens

LEADERSHIP

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TCMGA Web site
<http://www.tcmga.org>
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Project Profile: Japanese Garden Docent Program by Joy Lease

Location:

Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, University just north of I-30. West of downtown Fort Worth,



Photos by Nancy Curl

When thinking of the FWBG Japanese Garden, "tranquility", "contemplation", and "simplicity" often come to mind. Voted by Star-Telegram readers as the "best viewing location" in the Metroplex, the garden is, indeed, inspirational.

Even more than evoking the senses, however, it serves as a hugely educational demonstration facility, providing docents to student and adult groups on any given weekday. Coordinated by **MG Dolores Geisel**, the 39 trained docents, 14 of whom are Master Gardeners, have led 437 school children and 229 adults through its winding, undulating paths in just two months. Students learn about plants dating back to prehistoric times; they see and feel the differences in leaves and growth habits; delight at the koi; calm beside the waterfalls.

Adults love the historical stories of how the garden emerged in 15 years from a gravel pit/dump site and imagine how they might adapt their own landscapes. They are especially persistent in plant identification, freely discuss garden design, and never tire of asking questions about growth habits, pruning vs. free form, the variety of ground covers, and the use of stone.

November is the very best time to visit the Japanese Garden when the Japanese maples have turned into spectacular flames of red, purple and orange, as if to shout above all other autumn hues their celebration of beauty, grace and majesty. So, come and join us, and be at peace and harmony with the universe.



President's Message

December newsletter

As I am writing this, most committee chairs are filled for next year and thoughts are now turning to the budget and next year's directory. Organizationally, it is as much a life cycle as that of my own gardens. It seems as the year winds down and everything is anticipating going dormant, the business of the association is in 'full bloom'.

I received only one contact from a member in reply to my request for committee volunteers. I would love to hear from a few more of you. Change is a good thing for our association and more people involved generates more new ideas and keeps us 'fresh'. Please contact me if you are looking to get more involved. We have a spot for you!

Finally, I want to express my personal thanks to outgoing Executive Board members 1st VP- Programs Eleanor Tuck, 2nd VP- Ways and Means Bill Hall, Treasurer Carl Trehus and Secretary Dottie Bucy. It has been my privilege to serve on the Executive Board with you. You have served your association well and we all owe you our thanks.

Hope to see each and every one of you on December 3rd at the Holiday Luncheon!

— Susan Stanek, President

December Meeting

Holiday Luncheon



Thursday, December 3rd
11:00 am—2:00 pm
Diamond Oaks Country Club
5821 Diamond Oaks Drive North
Haltom City, Texas

Get your reservations in by 11/25
See website for more information.

How to Print in Black and White

If you would like to print out a paper copy of the newsletter, but don't want to waste that expensive color ink, here's how to set your printer to black and white only. Open the PDF version of the newsletter. (That's how it's emailed to you or on the website)

In the top left-hand corner, click on "File" and drag down to "Print Set-up". A dialog box opens. In the top right corner is a button that says "Properties. Click on it.

Look at the tabs at the top. Ignore "Setup" and "Features". Click on "Advanced". (Yes, advanced!)

Click on the top box, labeled "Print in Grayscale", and then the round button that says "Black Only".

Now click on the "Okay" button on the bottom. And then another "Okay" button to close Print Setup.

Now when you say "Print" your printer will only use black ink.

Not all that difficult, was it? Be sure to keep these instructions for next time. PRINT Them! (see below)



How to Print One or Few Pages

When you chose "Print", look at the dialog box that opens. Near top left is "Page Range"

If you want to print just one page, type that page number in the box labeled "pages". For example, to print the calendar page only, type an 8. Only page 8 prints.

If you want to print the calendar and events pages, then type in 8-9, to print those two pages only.

To print both front and back of the whole newsletter, go down one more in that "Print" box to the line labeled "Subset". There you see "All Pages in range". Click on the arrow to select "Odd pages only" and then click "OK". It will print pages 1-3-5-7 etc. When done, turn that stack over and run it through the printer again.

(Note—it may take a test run to find out if they go in face up or down and foot first or head first. Write down the way that works on your printer so you know next time.)

With the first printing re-loaded in the paper tray, this time select "Even pages Only". It prints on the back of the first run, but this time pages 2-4-6-8.

Yes, these steps take a little time, but you have learned so much doing them. Remember to use these instructions to print out these instructions—just print page 4.

-- Marilyn Sallee, Editor

TCMGA Meeting Minutes November 5, 2009

The program was Square-Foot Gardening presented by Julie Whitis.

The Business Meeting was called to order by President Susan Stanek at 11:00 a.m. with 186 members present.

The October General Meeting minutes were approved as published.

Treasurer Carl Trehus gave the following Treasurer's Report as of October 30, 2009:

Checking Account balance	\$ 6,715.12
Money Market Account	<u>20,751.16</u>
Total Assets	\$27,466.28

Total expenses to date are \$30,544.57

Carl reminded project leaders that all their budgeted funds must be spent by the end of the year and requested that everyone turn in their expenses before Christmas in order to make an easier transition to Pat Higgins, Treasurer for 2010.

OLD BUSINESS

The new time sheet is now on the MG website and should be used beginning November 1, 2009. The old time sheet will be on the website for a short while longer for those turning in hours for prior to November 1, 2009. If anyone has trouble with the new time sheet, they should contact their timekeeper for help. Susan Stanek and Eleanor Tuck can also be contacted for assistance.

NEW BUSINESS

LaVonne Nowlin read her personal statement of opinion regarding the increase to \$20 for the mailing of the Sharecropper and the expense of mailing dues statements to members.

President Stanek mentioned the following: Bulbs are available today to be picked up and she requested that all members should get their own bulbs as well as bulbs for absent members if they can deliver them.

Union Gospel Mission's 2010 calendar is for sale today for \$10, with the funds going to purchase additional cameras for MG educational efforts with UGM residents and others.

There are still technical problems with the on-line telephone schedule. The problems are with the host website not our TCMGA website, and efforts are being made to get the calendar back online as soon as possible. Kate Kilmurray can be contacted for assistance in using the schedule.

All hours were due by October 31, and dues can be paid through today with no penalty. After today a late charge will be added to the cost of the annual dues, per our bylaws.

There will be a Speaker's Bureau meeting at the Extension office on Nov. 11.

The December 3 Christmas lunch will be at Diamond Oaks Country Club. Cost is \$20 and can be paid today or mailed to Eleanor Tucker.

Sharon Chastain has forms for the suggested nominees for awards to be presented at the Christmas luncheon.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dottie Bucy, Secretary

Hospitality Team

Do you like to meet new people and enjoy a good party? Do you think you can entertain guests as well as Martha Stewart? If so, we would love to have you serve on the Master Gardener Hospitality Team. Tasks include arriving a little early to the meetings to make coffee, organizing the food on the tables, sampling wonderful new recipes, and quickly clean up after lunch is served. It is also a great way to meet other Master Gardeners. If you are interested in

volunteering, contact
Johnna Reed at
rlreed@sbcglobal.net
or 817-294-0543.

— Johnna Reed



SuperStar MG Profile

**Nancy Curl
Above and Beyond Award,
500+ Hours**



In Her Own Words

Like most of my gardening friends.....Gardening has always been part of my life. Even though my brother, sister and I were "Air Force brats" and lived all over the US and around the world, gardening was always a part of our family life. My mom was raised on a farm in Oklahoma and my dad grew up farming in Nebraska. Whenever we were stateside we took yearly trips back to the family farms to ride tractors, chase the livestock, and even help with the crops.

No matter where we lived, we had a garden. My dad grew vegetables and my mother had a flower garden. As soon as we were big enough to "play in the dirt" we learned how to plant, tend and harvest vegetables and always had fresh cut flowers on the table.

As we grew up and had families of our own, my brother, sister and I still have a love of gardening. My brother's garden in South Carolina always looks like a cover from Garden Gate magazine, with vegetable plants tucked into a bed or planter. My sister's garden in Delaware is filled with lush green plants and beautiful blooming trees. My garden in Texas is always a work in progress, expanding and changing as I learn about new plants and experiment with interesting ideas.

My husband George and I met in college. We both began careers in education after George completed his obligation to the Air Force. After teach-

ing for several years, we both became school administrators.

After retiring as school principals, and years of living in the mid-cities we made the decision to move to the country. We needed to find a place to build a barn for George's cars. While I love to "play in the dirt," he loves to race his MG and restore cars.

We ended up on three acres in Parker County. As I began the adventure of clearing underbrush in various tree lines I started observing more closely the birds and wildlife that shared our space. I became concerned they would leave if their habitat was gone.

Two Parker County extension agents were invited out to talk with us about the wildlife and native plants and trees that live on and around our property. After this education, a decision was made to keep some areas untouched. We designated native "islands" and "no-mow" zones for the deer, road runners, red fox, rabbits, Cardinals, and hummingbirds that call our home their home too.

My continuing education about plants and gardening exploded when I became a Master Gardener in 2007. George started learning more about gardening too, patiently listening as I share information about a new plant I discovered or a gardening tip from a fellow Master Gardener. In the past three years we have carefully cut brush, planted a small orchard, built raised vegetable beds, created outdoor rooms and numerous garden areas using as many native and adapted native plants as possible.

My garden may not be lush and green all year or even "Garden Gate" ready, but it provides a habitat for wildlife, a bountiful harvest to share, and a sense of peace and accomplishment we enjoy with family and friends.

My thanks to all of the wonderful gardeners I have met since becoming a TCMG. Your knowledge and friendship is never-ending!

- It is the dedicated Master Gardeners, such as
- Nancy, who inspire us all and make this
- organization the outstanding chapter it is.
- Watch for future profiles of our SuperStar
- Master Gardeners in coming months.

(Continued from page 1)

enth-century herbal recommends the use of soft ivy twigs stewed in butter to relieve sunburn. In various folk traditions, the leaves and stems have been used to treat cancer, relieve dysentery, and ease rheumatism.

The herb mistletoe has also held a special place in holiday ritual. The Druids, believing that it protected them from evil, used a sacred knife to gather it on the sixth day of the moon, then sent it around the village to announce the coming of the new year. It was hung in the doorway, and those who walked under it exchanged a kiss of peace, symbolizing their hope for harmonious relations all year long. To celebrate this tradition, you can create a mistletoe ball: a ball cut from florist's foam, soaked in water, and then poked with mistletoe leaves and berries, and decorated with red ribbon (keep it moist in the refrigerator until you are ready to hang it).

Mistletoe was used by early physicians as a treatment for epilepsy and other convulsive disorders; because of its tendency to reduce blood pressure, it has also been used in the treatment of cardiac disease. Be careful with the berries though -- eaten in large quantities, they can be fatal.

A Wreath of Rosemary



Of all herbs, rosemary -- the symbol of remembrance -- is the one most people associate with Christmas. Legend has it that the Virgin Mary, during the flight into Egypt, washed her cloak and spread it on a rosemary bush to dry. The plant's white flowers turned a heavenly blue -- the blue of Mary's mantle.

Fashioned into lush green wreaths or tied with bits of ribbon into garlands with bay, holly, mistletoe, and ivy, rosemary was used to decorate the halls of the rich and the cottages of the poor. The traditional boar's head, the centerpiece of the Renaissance holiday feast, was crowned with a garland of rosemary, its green tips bright with gold gilt.

Earlier yet, in medieval times, a lover who wished his lady to remember him might offer her a spring of rosemary tied with red silk ribbons. (Recently, scientists have learned that there is more to the memory business than just a bit of tradition. The leaves contain a chemical that stimulates the brain. German physicians are using it to treat patients with Alzheimer's disease.)

Here in Texas, there is no excuse for not having enough rosemary to deck the halls in royal fashion. The plant, in either its upright or prostrate form, flourishes in most parts of the state.

"Arp" (named for the North Texas town where it was found in 1972 by Texas herbalists Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay) is especially winter-hardy.

Rosemary thrives in alkaline soil, and can grow to 5 feet in height. A special plus: deer don't like it. My favorite use of rosemary for the holidays is as a fragrant wreath around a punch bowl or glass compote dish filled with votive candles. I use a large plastic saucer from a planting pot, arrange wet chunks of florist foam around it, and create my wreaths with 6- to 8-inch springs of fresh rosemary, interspersed with trailing ivy and pieces of holly, and accented with a red bow. If I keep the wreath watered, it stays green for a month.

Susan Wittig Albert is the author of the China Bayles herbal mysteries. Under the pseudonym of Robin Paige, she and her husband Bill Albert write Victorian mysteries. The Alberts live and garden near Bertram, Texas. Visit them at <http://www.mysterypartners.com/>.

This article is an excerpt from "Horticulture Update," Texas AgriLife Extension Service, December, 1998

DECEMBER 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 8a Randolmill Pk Greenhouse 8:30a BG Trial 8:30a CG Veggie	2 8a Veterans Park 9a Teen Challenge 9a BG Perennial 9a BG Children's 9:30a Thistle Hill 3:15p Fitzgerald 7p Ladies Garden	3 8:30a Alice Carlson 10a TCMGA LUNCHEON 7p NCNPSOT	4 8:30a CG Veggie	5 Composting Demo Wildscape Class CG Class Fruit trees FWBG Birds class
6	7 8:30a Alice Carlson 10a Union Gospel	8 8a Randolmill Pk Greenhouse 8:30a BG Trial 8:30a CG Veggie	9 8a Veterans Park 9a Teen Challenge 9a BG Perennial 9a BG Children's 9:30a Thistle Hill 3:15p Fitzgerald	10 8:30a Alice Carlson	11 8:30a CG Veggie CG Class Bulbs	12 9am SW Crthse 9a Wildscape class - Cross Timbers Preservation- Steve Chaney Composting Demo
13	14 8:30a Alice Carlson 10a Union Gospel 3p Heritage Elem.	15 8a Randolmill Pk Greenhouse 8a Liberty Garden 8:30a BG Trial 8:30a CG Veggie	16 8a Veterans Park 9a Teen Challenge 9a BG Perennial 9a BG Children's 3:15p Fitzgerald BRIT Brown Bag	17 8:30a Alice Carlson TCMGA Board	18 8:30a CG Veggie	19 9a Hulen Library
20	21 8:30a Alice Carlson 10a Union Gospel	22 8a Randolmill Pk Greenhouse 8:30a BG Trial 8:30a CG Veggie 7p Organic GC	23 8a Veterans Park 8:30a Hulen Library 9a Teen Challenge 9a BG Perennial 9am SW Crthse 9a BG Children's 9:30a Thistle Hill 3:15p Fitzgerald	24 8:30a Alice Carlson	25 <i>Christmas</i> 	26
27	28 8:30a Alice Carlson 10a Union Gospel 3p Heritage Elem.	29 8a Randolmill Pk Greenhouse 8:30a BG Trial 8:30a CG Veggie	30 8a Veterans Park 9a Teen Challenge 9a BG Perennial 9a BG Children's 9a Hulen Library 9am SW Crthse 9:30a Thistle Hill 3:15p Fitzgerald	31 8:30a Alice Carlson <i>New Year's Eve</i>		

UP-COMING EVENTS

NOTE: for this month's events, see back cover

2010

- Jan. 1 Holiday - New Year's Day
 Jan. 7 **TCMGA MEETING**
 Jan. 11 Heritage Elementary workday (new project).
 Jan. 12 Intern Class - Orientation
 Jan. 14 Intern Class - Soil, Compost, Organics
 Jan. 18 Holiday - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 Jan. 19 Intern Class - Field Trip TBD
 Jan. 25 Heritage Elementary workday (new project).
 Jan. 26 Intern Class - Basic Hort & Botany
 Jan. 28 Intern Class - Vegetables, Herbs, Perennials
 Feb. 2 Intern Class - Plant Pathology
 Feb. 4 **TCMGA MEETING**
 Feb. 4 Intern Class - Meeting (am) Pruning (pm)
 Feb. 8 Heritage Elementary workday (new project).
 Feb. 9 Intern Class - Field Trip TBD
 Feb. 10 BRIT Brown Bag Botany
 Feb. 11 Intern Class - Entomology
 Feb. 15 Holiday - President's Day
 Feb. 16 Intern Class - Landscape, Xeriscape, Container
 Feb. 18 Intern Class - Turf
 Feb. 23 Intern Class - Plant Propagation
 Feb. 25 Intern Class - Field Trip TBD
 Mar. 2 Intern Class - Fruit & Nut
 Mar. 4 **TCMGA MEETING**
 Mar. 4 Intern Class - Meeting (am), Field Trip (pm)
 Mar. 8 Heritage Elementary workday (new project).
 Mar. 9 Intern Class - Rainwater Harvesting, Irrigation
 Mar. 10 BRIT Brown Bag Botany
 Mar. 11 Intern Class - Trees & Shrubs
 Mar. 16 Intern Class - Native Plants
 Mar. 18 Intern Class - No Class
 Mar. 22 Heritage Elementary workday (new project).
 Mar. 23 Intern Class - Photography & PowerPoint
 Mar. 25 Intern Class - Field Trip TBD
 Mar. 29 Holiday - Cesar Chavez Day
 Mar. 30 Intern Class - Make-up Day if needed
 Apr. 1 **TCMGA MEETING**
 Apr. 2 Holiday - Good Friday
 Apr 8-10 **Texas MG Conf. - Dallas**

<http://www.2010tmgconference.org>

Your Event Here - send info of an event or class for this column to tmgmarilyn@gmail.com

Announcements/Going On

NEW—Holidays on Calendar—the holidays listed on the events calendar are the official County days; the office will be closed.

Project Workdays — contact the Project Chair - see page 11 for details

Field Trips—TCMGA Field Trip Chair is Kay Gunn. See schedule page 10 of this issue.

FWBG Events— See calendar at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens for more information.

State, Regional & International MG Conferences, MG Specialist Training—See State MG website for more information: <http://www.texasmastergardeners.com/>

Wildscape Classes—each first Saturday at 9 am at the Molly Hollar Wildscape in Veteran's Park, Arlington, following Saturday volunteer workday. Also Composting demo/class.

BRIT (Botanical Research Center of Texas) phone 817-257-7132 or 817-871-7682

Composting Classes—2nd Saturday of each month 9-11 am 703 NW Green Oaks Blvd., Arlington 817-459-6778

NCNPSOT—native plant meeting at Ft W Botanic Garden 7 pm. See topic at their website

Free Organic Classes—1st Wednesday every month Ladies of the Garden, 5208 Hidden Oaks Lane, Arlington 817-572-0148

Note: This list of items of interest to MGs may not be automatically approved for hours. Please confirm approval with Steve Chaney.

Below are clickable links in the electronic version. Another reason to get this via email.

Our local TCMGA website
<http://www.tcmga.org/>

State MG Website and TMG news:
<http://www.texasmastergardeners.com>

State Newsletter: <http://www.tmgnewsletter.org/2009/July09c.pdf>

Our RC Demo Garden Website:
<http://www.localharvest.org/member/M27123>

Entomology Specialist Training

By Lance Jepson, Entomology Specialist 2009

Should I or shouldn't I, is a question that all Master Gardeners face when deciding whether or not to invest in taking a specialist training course. In this case, the investment was close to \$1000 dollars, by the time one pays the course fee, the hotel room, the meals and drives to the location of the course. On the other hand, I knew that my knowledge of insects and their control was very limited and the demand for insect control information from our clients is high, so I enrolled in the MG Entomology Training.



Photos by Lance Jepson

On September 28, 2009 I made the trip to Conroe, Texas. Upon arrival my jaw dropped when I found the class was being held at the recently constructed \$500,000 MG Office, a very nice facility, and a nearby 350 Acre Girl Scout Camp. The Montgomery County Master Gardeners had contributed from their own pockets a large portion of the construction costs of their office, kitchen and class rooms as well as considerable labor for their new facility. You should see the demonstration gardens!

We were greeted by some of the volunteer staff and the coordinators from the Entomology Department at Texas A&M. There were 21 MG's taking the course from 11 counties. There were nine Master Gardeners attending from Harris County. They are working on a special Chili Thrips project, an insect that we might face in the future. The

course was what I thought it would be, that is, PowerPoint presentations and lectures, but to my surprise there was little time for discussion and interaction with the lecturers or other participants. During the week that followed we had lectures from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM., making a total of 32 hours of lectures from eleven different Texas A&M Entomology and Extension Specialists. One of the lecturers was Dr. Mike Merchant, who developed a toxic use reduction program for Texas Schools, a program that I had used in Florida to develop a similar program. Over two years we reduced pesticide use in Florida Schools by 50%.

I was disappointed that I did not get to know more of the participants and what they were doing in entomology. The program was so jammed packed that we hardly got to speak to each other. There was no get acquainted session and we only had interactions with our neighbor for discussion over the week. We all sat in the same place each day. We received an amazing amount of information regarding Texas insects and with a little initiative on the part of the participant; one assumes that it will be possible to make good use of it. Fortunately, we were given copies of the presentations and F@ctSheets full of information to study after we returned home.

We had field trips in the rain, (I did not have an umbrella and got lost on trail), learned how to use a lot of insect collecting equipment, and were shown how to make an insect collection. The class members spent several hours collecting, identifying and mounting insect specimens. The instructors even provided lights to attract the insects, and took us to the horse barns to collect beetles. (This brought back memories of an insect collection that I did 50 years ago in college)

I returned to Tarrant County with a lot of information, including a flash drive full of Entomology F@stSheets, as well as an enthusiasm for Entomology. Now that I am back, I have to decide how I am going to use all of this information, or better yet, how am I going to make it available to my fellow MG's. I would love to hear what you think.



Photos by Lance Jepson

As with all good MG activities we are required to develop a follow-up project. After consulting with fellow MG's and with Horticulturalist Steve Chaney, I decided to work on a fact sheet indexed manual for the office. I also returned with a small collection of insects and am in the process of identifying each insect and adding it to the office collection. If any Tarrant County Master Gardeners have insects that you would like to add to the office collection, I would be more than happy to label and transfer them.

I am going to work with Dr. Mike Merchant to bring you some of the latest entomological information. Obviously these articles will not be the result of original research but a compilation of information from the Texas AgriLife Extension Entomology Specialist training course. I am also working on an Entomology presentation for the Speakers Bureau. Lucurtis Williams, Coordinator, believes there will be a big demand for this type of presentation in the spring.

I want to thank Eleanor Tuck and Marilyn Sallee, the only other two MGs who have taken the Entomology Specialist training course, for providing me valuable guidance as to how I can contribute to Entomology in Tarrant County.

Next year the Entomology Specialist training course will be held in San Antonio.

FIELD TRIP REPORT— Granbury

The last field trip of the year was a winner! Fifty of us trekked to Granbury and were rewarded with three totally different and beautiful gardens.

The first stop was a remarkable five acre country garden belonging to a Hood County Master Gardener. Starting on solid rock, and adding truckload after truckload of amendments, this very knowledgeable gardener totally transformed the bare caliches into a landscape of drought tolerant perennials, featuring EarthKind roses and Buck roses. It is ever-changing with something always in bloom. The property has huge live oak clumps, slopes down to a pond, and is spectacular.

Next we visited another Hood County Master Gardener on the shores of Lake Granbury. The garden is beautifully designed on several levels with a waterfall, two ponds, a swimming pool and palm trees, which give it a tropical look. All of this leads down to the lake and the dock. This is the place to be for a relaxing, balmy day.

The last stop took us to a historic property just a block from the Granbury square. Visitors are greeted by native plants outside the fence of these spacious grounds. Inside, we found that the entire property has been thoughtfully and carefully developed over the years in keeping with the early 1900s. What a pleasure to move from one area to the next – the perennial garden, the vegetable garden, the antique rose area, the brook that spills down to the lake, the wooded path along 500 feet of lake shoreline. An unexpected bonus was a small gallery with art work by Texas artists; a quiet retreat back in time.

Then, of course, everyone headed for the square to indulge in some fine little restaurants and some serious shopping in the many boutiques.



Committee Profile: **Membership Committee**

Sue Ellen Schlitzer, Committee Chair

It's that time of year again when the Membership Committee kicks into high gear. Dues get paid, hours submitted and we get the go-ahead to start on the directory. If only it were that simple.

Membership works closely with other committees to ensure that all requirements for recertification have been met before the membership directory is printed. Treasury provides a list of paid members. Timekeepers keep us informed of members who have satisfied the required hours both in number and category. All of this information supports recertification and being listed in the directory.

People who have not reported hours for the year, are deficient on hours, and/or have not paid their dues are contacted by phone. As of November 5th, 12% (40 people) reported no hours by the November 5th deadline. Members who had not paid their dues on time numbered 37. Before the directory can be finalized, other committees will e-mail and telephone these members to resolve these issues.

Once these membership issues are finalized, work begins on the remaining parts of the directory, namely, Committees, Project Chairs, Standing Rules and Bylaws. The President will appoint the Committee Chairs and the appropriate updates can be made in the new directory. A copy of the revised directory is sent to the President, Executive and Advisory Board members for review.

As with most things, the more you do them the better you become. Carl Trehus, Treasurer and former Membership Chair, has streamlined the membership renewal process considerably. By mailing dues notices with member information as it appears in the directory, members can check their contact information. While it takes considerable time to prepare the invoice state-

**...this is not a
one person
or one committee
job**

ments for mailing to our membership, it has proven to be a timesaver in both getting dues paid promptly by the majority of our membership (75%) and having updated information before the directory goes to press.

The directory is printed through the Tarrant County Printer. Directories are distributed in the spring as soon as they are ready. This year we mailed directories to those members who were not able to pick them up at the monthly meeting. Members provided a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Ninety-five percent of our members claimed their directories.

Membership contact information is maintained on an EXCEL spreadsheet. Time Keepers let us know when someone is resigning from the organization. The E-Blast Coordinator keeps us informed when e-mails are not delivered. Most often, I can call the member and get the new e-mail address. In turn, any updates we get are sent to timekeepers, e-blast, Speakers Bureau, Extension Agent, the newsletter, Executive and Advisory Board members.

The Membership Committee is also the Telephone Committee. On those rare occasions where members are notified of important, timely information, such as the time the meeting location was changed, we are asked to telephone those members who do not have e-mail to ensure they get the information on time.

After reading this article, you can see this is not a one person or one committee job. There are many people who support the Membership Committee and contribute to the Membership Directory.

My personal thanks to: Carl Trehus, without whom I would not have survived the first year; Susan Stanek, Raelene Darling and the Time Keepers who keep me "in the loop"; and Marilyn Sallee, for getting the updates in the newsletter. Also, Renee Beckum and Pam Jewell, who serve as backup whenever I need help.

Committee Profile: **State Awards Committee**

Eleanor Tuck, Committee Chair TCMGA

Have you ever spent any time looking at the “Award Wall” in the Extension office? If you have, I’m sure you noticed how many years our Association has been recognized in the Texas-wide competition with other Master Gardener Associations.

We have won several times as **THE #1 Association**, and many of our members have been recognized for their outstanding leadership at home and at the State Master Gardener level. Our Projects are always winners for their creativity, uniqueness and educational accomplishments. It is important to note, however, that projects are NOT begun with the idea of going for an award—the judging includes evaluation of the value to the community and the educational accomplishments for the community.

I came into the Association in '97, yes the last Century, and have been fortunate to have been a part of the award writing team. For several years, we entered only a few categories and we always have won 1st, 2nd or 3rd for each of our entries. We missed out only once on one project. Along came Ginger Bason who moved us toward entering all categories. We did, and we won something in every category. Our winning writing team has included Tammy Edwards, JoAnn Hahn, Joy Lease, Sue Ellen Schlitzer, Ginger Bason and Eleanor Tuck.

In case you have not read the plaques on the walls, here are a few to look for: Association, Individual, Project, Publication, Graphic Presentation, Mass Media, Educational Program and Newsletter. Each category has criteria with emphasis on education. Then there are Exhibits and Posters: the Exhibit portrays the Association and Posters will focus on a project or single subject. In recent years, other associations are beginning to compete in this area of poster/exhibit.

So next time you are working in the office, take a few minutes between phone calls and admire the accomplishments of the Association—and You are an important Member.



2009 State Awards Program

*Ginger Bason, State Awards Committee Chair
Texas Master Gardener Association*

The work of the State Awards Committee starts in the fall with the rules handbook and updating the website for the coming entries. AWARDS HANDBOOK for 2009 entries was posted on the website November 1st. There were very few changes.

The hope is that we will continue to have the great response for entries in all categories and from all levels of associations that there has been for the past 2 years. The judging will continue to be done by a group of out-of-state judges. The points awarded by these judges are tallied and double-checked. Winners are the high scores in each category and each of four membership size groups, so that small MG organizations are not in direct competition with large groups with lots of members.

Plaques are publically presented at the state conference. Now is the time to get those entries ready and reservations made for the conference in Dallas in 2010.

State Conference Info:
www.2010TMGAconference.org

TMG Awards Info: <http://tmgaawards.com/>

Meet the AgriLife Staff Billie Hammack Administrative Assistant



You will find her at the desk directly across from Steve Chaney's door—AgriLife's new Administrative Assistant for Horticulture, Billie Hammack. Billie has worked for AgriLife since July 2008, and has recently filled the position of helping Steve and Laura Miller. For

the time being, until the other position is filled, Billie will also be helping Ken and Monica.

Billie is delighted to be working with the Master Gardeners. "Thank you, because I learn something new everyday from them. They are helping me tremendously." Billie is especially grateful for when the office duty MGs offer to help with the paperwork and copies.

Billie is "all about family". You can admire photos of her grandkids, ages 7-16 years, in the photos above her desk. Next time you are in the office, stop by and say hello.



Upcoming Classes at the Community Garden

Saturday, December 5

Fruit trees & How to Prune Them - Renee Beckum - TCMG will teach you about developing a backyard orchard, using fruit trees, grapevines and blackberries for our area. You will also learn how to properly prune and espalier fruit trees.

Friday, December 11

How to Layer a Pot with Spring Blooming Bulbs - Claire Alford and Donna Morris, Propagation Specialists, will teach how to have a sneak-peek of spring with layered bulbs in a pot.

Happy Birthday, Master Gardeners!

December Birthdays

- 1 Sharon Chastain, Bill Keller, Carole, O'Connell, Marilyn Newman
- 2 Donna Fry (I)
- 3 Mary Flanagan
- 4 Claire Brown (I)
- 5 Jerry Sorenson, Judy Childers
- 9 Mimi Mancuso, Earl Alexander
- 12 Sheri Miller (I)
- 15 Ann Knudsen (I)
- 16 Julie Hames, Jack Gerloff
- 17 Howard Davis
- 18 Jolene Hetrick
- 20 Sandra Johnson
- 21 Pam Sustaire
- 22 Nelda McGlinchey
- 23 Carolyn Critz
- 24 Claudia Cimma, Kathleen McKinney
- 25 Rita Hottel, Ellie Bowmar
- 26 Susan Slagle
- 27 Ester Procter
- 29 Joyce Quam

If your birthday is this month and you don't see it, please contact Joy Lease, (817) 795-5133 or email jlease@prodigy.net

— Joy Lease

Directory Updates

Please note the following updates in your directory:

Dalegowski, Flora - f.dalegowski@att.net

Mann, Terri – new e-mail address alacko01@att.net

Moore, Victoria – new e-mail address bobvcm@aol.com

Report changes or corrections to Sue Ellen Schlitzer, s.schlitzer@sbcglobal.net or 817-294-1329

Volunteer Opportunities for TCMGA

<u>Project Code & Name</u>	<u>Work Days/Times</u>	<u>Project Manager</u>	<u>Phone</u>
301 BRIT Activities	call chairman	Kay Yount	817-292-7690
302 BG Perennial Garden	Wed. 9:00 a.m.	Cindy Woelke	817-366-4436
302 BG Trial Garden	Tues. 8:30-11:30 a.m.	Susan Miller	817-261-1420
303 Community Garden	(Contact area coordinators below)		
Project Co-chairs:	Pat Higgins, Nancy Curl and Tom Scott		
	817-946-6278 817-319-1795 817-427-9009		
Barn beds:	Charlotte Berck, wrberck@peoplepc.com		817-426-6417
Compost:	Sue Ellen & Ron Schlitzer s.schlitzer@sbcglobal.net		817-294-1329
Education:	Nancy Curl, nl_curl@yahoo.com		817-319-1795
Enabling beds:	Jeanette Berggren, jberggren@sbcglobal.net		817-249-6815
Greenhouse:	Tom Scott, trutexen@aol.com - Tuesdays		940-433-2601
Herb Garden:	Rita Hottel, aescom@charter.net - Wednesdays		817-295-2883
Mowing/Edging:	Tom Scott, trutexen@aol.com - Tuesdays		940-433-2601
Orchard and Berry	Renee Beckum jrbeckum@sbcglobal.net		214-914-6597
Perennial beds: (developing)	Joann Hahn, joannhahn@att.net		817-923-9250
	Ginger Bason, gbason@hotmail.com		817-838-7321
Propagation	Claire Alford, Joy Lease, and Donna Morris		
Roses:	Nan Garvin garbre@hotmail.com - Fridays		817-477-2867
TCU students & Vegetable garden	Pat Higgins, Ragdollpatb@sbcglobal.net		817-946-6278
	Tues, & Fri. 8:30 a.m.		
203 Grapevine Botanic Garden	call coordinator	Shari Stanfield	817-685-9990
304 Casa House	call chairman	Rocky Deutscher	817-921-6944
304 JPS Memorial	call chairman	Kay Lewis	817-281-6600
304 Teen Challenge	Wed. 9 a.m.	Debbie Bollinger	817-498-1508
304 Thistle Hill	1 st , 3 rd Weds. 9:30 a.m.	Emily Ward	817-281-5925
304 Union Gospel Mission	Mon. 10 a.m.	Gay Larson	817-441-6560
305 Bob Jones Nature Center	call chairman	Nancy Searl	817-542-3190
305 Composting Demo	1 st Sat.	Don Graves	817-465-1667
	2 nd Sat.	Charlie Shiner	817-488-6123
305 FW Library at Hulen St.	3rd Wed. 8:30 a.m.	Devanie Fergus	817-861-1932
	3 rd Sat, 9:00 a.m.	Evaline Woodrey	817-295-5281
305 SW Sub-Courthouse	2 nd Sat, last Wed. 9 a.m.	Gailon Hardin	817-475-0923
305 Liberty Garden	call chairman	Wendi Carlucci	817-488-5640
	2nd Tues, 8-11 a.m.		
305 Veterans Park-Wildscape	Tues. 8-11 am Randolmill Pk. Greenhouse		
	Wed. 8-11 p.m., 2nd Sat, 8-12 a.m. Nancy Swan		817-535-9991
<u>School Gardens</u>			
306 Alice Carlson	Mon/& Thurs 8:30 a.m.	Sharon Chastain	817-926-2575
306 Fitzgerald	Wed. 3:15 p.m.	Leeann Rosenthal	817-237-7180
306 BG-Children's Garden	Wed. 9-11:30 a.m.	Mary McCoy	817-561-0598
306 Heritage School OLE	2nd & 4th Mon. 2:45 p.m	Jackie Peel	817-581-0977

Tarrant County Master Gardener Association
200 Taylor St., Suite 500
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-7308



Calendar of This Month's Events



- Dec. 2 Ladies of the Garden 7 pm
- Dec. 3 **TCMGA MEETING**
- Dec. 5 FWBG Birds' Christmas Tree 11 am
- Dec. 5 Wildscape Class - Working with Children
- Dec. 5 CG Class: Fruit trees & How to Prune Them
- Dec. 11 CG XClass: Layer Spring-blooming Bulbs
- Dec. 14 Heritage Elementary workday (new project).
- Dec. 24 Holiday - Christmas Eve
- Dec. 25 Holiday - Christmas

Steve Chaney—For up-to-the-minute
TCMGA news visit: www.tcmga.org



More state news:
www.texasmastergardeners.com