



Mission Statement

To support and assist Texas Cooperative Extension by providing the community with information on horticultural practices consistent with Texas Cooperative Extension recommendations.



President's Notepad

The submissions for state awards have been mailed and it was not a quick and easy job. THANK YOU to all of the people that filled out the form giving the state awards committee the information we needed to get started.

It took many hours of writing and rewriting; now we have to cross our fingers and wait until May, OK—CROSS YOUR FINGERS!!! Yes you can work in the garden and keep your fingers crossed. THANK YOU to Eleanor Tuck, Tammy Edwards, Joy Lease, Joann Hahn and Emily Ward.

The state conference begins on the first Thursday in May and will take the place of the TCMGA monthly meeting. You can get all of the information on the state web-site. The state conference really is a lot of fun and there is so much to learn from the programs offered. Make plans to attend!!!!

Congratulations to everyone that attended the Feb. meeting. There were 160 MG's signed in, our largest attendance ever. How many hot-dogs will Ben need to cook for us in March????

—Ginger Bason

March Monthly TCMGA Program

We had another fantastic turnout at our February 2nd. meeting with Lynn Barber presenting beautiful pictures and enthusiastic commentary on her year of birding in Texas. And we have only just begun! Our March Master Gardener day will be filled with some new folks (the newest intern class), good eats (**Ben's** famous hot dogs) and gardening fun and inspiration.

Our first guest speaker at our March 2nd meeting will be **Landry Lockett**, the Collin County Extension Agent. A relaxed, informal presentation described as ". . . fun exploring the use of roses in the landscape" will come just in time for some new thoughts on garden design.

At 12:00, **Ben Oefinger**, one of our resident gardening gurus, will present a very special program on creating a sanctuary garden, called "A place of safety and peace for man and beast."

9:30 Sign-in and coffee

10:00 "Rose Romp - Thoughts on Roses in the Landscape - **Landry Lockett**

11:00 Business meeting and hot dog social

12:00 "Creating a Sanctuary Garden" - **Ben Oefinger**

Everyone come, and let's show the Collin County Agent what a great association we have!

—Joy Lease



Tarrant County Master Gardener Association Meeting Minutes - February 2, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 10:58 a.m. by President Ginger Bason. There were 160 members in attendance.

The minutes of the January 2006 meeting were approved as published in the Sharecropper.

Treasurer Rita Hottel gave the Treasurer's Report. Copies were available for members.

President Bason announced the Audit Committee headed by Ann Couch had reviewed the financial books of the organization for 2005 and they were found to be in order.

Barbara Finholt announced the raffle fund in 2005 raised \$2,300.01. From this fund disbursements to the following TCMGA projects were made:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Southwest Subcourt house | \$135.41 |
| Thistle Hill | \$159.55 |
| Union Gospel Mission | \$148.93 |
| Alice Carlson Learning Center | \$600.00 |
| Teen Challenge | \$478.25 |
| Henrietta Creek Orchard | \$460.71 |
| Fitzgerald Elementary Garden | \$215.00 |

The membership approved the disbursement of these funds.

The membership approved covering the cost of Steve Chaney's registration fee at the State Meeting in May.

The following members were approved for the Nominating Committee:

JoAnn Hahn
Ben Oefinger
Susan Stanek
Judy Butler
Tammy Edwards

Various Announcements were made including:

Welcomed Lou Curtis Williams who is transferring her membership from Johnson County.

TCMGA received \$50 from Little Hands on the Farm.

Caladium orders were being taken. Deadline for ordering is February 10.

Anyone interested in taking a bus/van to the State Convention should contact Joy Lease.

Shari Stanfield is looking for people to work the upcoming Home and Garden Shows.

Submitted by Judy Butler, Secretary

Garage Sale



Our third annual MG garage sale will be held during the first part of the April meeting. Start planning now to bring those items you no longer use or think another Master Gardener would like. All kinds of things sell: pots, plants, books, tools, and anything related to gardening.

You will need to price your items before you bring them to the meeting. All proceeds of the garage sale go to funding our TCMGA projects. We will also have a silent auction for items deemed to be of great quality or interest.

We have raised approximately \$600 each year we have held this sale. Let's beat that total this year!

—Judy Butler

Master Gardener Logo Item Sales

This year TCMGA will again offer Master Gardener Logo Items for sale to TCMGA members. Our list will include T-shirts, long and short sleeve khaki and denim work shirts, sweatshirts, golf shirts and various other items.



We are hopeful that we will be able to offer women's sizes as well as the men's sizes that were offered in the past.

We will order only once from our vendor after all of member orders have been collected to get the best prices possible. You will be able to order the items at the March TCMGA meeting. Payment is required at the time of your order. We expect items to be available at the April TCMGA meeting.

— James Nelson

Earth Kind On-Line Training

"This is a great opportunity to increase your knowledge on the computer at your leisure, I hope you will try it and let me know what you think." **Steve Chaney**

From: Douglas F. Welsh, Ph.D.
To: Master Gardeners

The Earth Kind On-Line Master Gardener Training has been rolled out slowly to insure quality. This program is designed to provide information on a variety of environmentally-friendly (Earth Kind) practices for use in the home landscape and garden.

On-line training modules are now in place and electronic testing finalized. Upon completion of the training and testing, the Extension Agent in your county is notified electronically of your participation in the on-line training.

Additional Earth Kind modules are in the works. The Extension's goal is to have all Texas Master Gardeners increase their basic knowledge of Earth Kind practices via this on-line training. In doing so, Extension can quantify and document an increase in knowledge of a valuable clientele, the Texas Master Gardeners. Don Wilkerson and Dan Lineberger, Extension Horticulturists, have graciously provided time and expertise to development this on-line training and evaluation.

The Earth Kind website is:
<http://earthkind.tamu.edu/EKOnLineModules.html>
Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
Douglas F. Welsh, Ph.D.

Time Sheet Requests

We would like to ask MG's to mark your calendar to turn in your time sheet each month. It will help you to keep current and make it easier on the timekeepers. Thanks.

— Pat Lovejoy

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 |
| 311 Perennial Garden | 8:30 a.m., Weds. | Patsy Johnson | 817-292-5358 |
| 312 Trial Garden Maintenance | 1 st , 3 rd & 5 th Tues. | Carole O'Connell | 817-921-0713 |
| 312 Trial Garden Data | 2 nd & 4 th Tues. | Carole O'Connell | 817-921-0713 |
| 313 BG Cottage Garden | Call chairman | Diane Clark | 817-249-2760 |
| 321 Thistle Hill | 1 st , 3 rd Weds. 9:30 a.m. | Emily Ward | 817-281-5925 |
| 322 Union Gospel Mission | Every Mon. 9 a.m. | Gay Larson | 817-441-6560 |
| 323 Grapevine Botanic Garden | Call coordinator | Shari Stanfield | 817-685-9990 |
| 324 Mansfield Main St. Project | 3 rd Wed. 9 a.m. | Donna Turner | 817-473-8253 |
| 325 Weston Gardens Docent | Call chairman | Rose Marie Mercado | 817-923-9555 |
| 326 Teen Challenge | Every Wed. 9 a.m. | Debbie Bollinger | 817-498-1508 |
| 399 Gardening with Dotty | Last Tuesday monthly | Dotty Woodson | 817-884-1296 |
| 401 Composting Demo | 1 st Sat. 2 nd Sat. | Don Graves Charlie Shiner | 817-465-1667 817-548-7117 |
| 402 FW Nature Center | Call chairman | Leeann Rosenthal | 817-237-7180 |
| 403 FW Library at Hulen St. | 4 th Thurs, 10 a.m. | Evaline Woodrey | 817-295-4683 |
| 404 SW Sub-Courthouse | 2 nd Sat, last Wed. | Gailon Hardin | 817-457-4703 |
| 405 Liberty Garden | Call chairman | Wendi Carlucci | 817-488-5640 |
| 406 Veterans Park-Wildscape | Tues 1:00 - 3:30 | Devanie Fergus | 817-861-1932 |
| 408 TX Smartscape Demo | Call chairman | Michael Warren | 817-531-6765 |
| 612 Henrietta Creek Orchard | 1 st Mon. or 3 rd Wed. | Sue Short | 817-439-3202 |

School Gardens

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 601 Alice Carlson | Mon/Thurs 8:30 a.m. | Sharon Chastain | 817-926-2575 |
| 602 Branson | Call chairman | Glenda Page | 817-447-8348 |
| 603 Brewer | Call chairman | Joyce Hallbauer | 817-367-3582 |
| 604 Fitzgerald | Wed. 3:15 p.m. | Leeann Rosenthal | 817-237-7180 |
| 605 Oakhurst | Call chairman | Margaret Hare | 817-763-5054 |
| 611 Children's Garden | Call chairman | Judy Sargent | 817-589-0221 |

Membership Committee News

We hope you were able to receive the 2006 directory at the last MG meeting. If not, plan to attend next month and you can pick one up then. We would like to again thank Charlotte Krystinik for our beautiful cover. If this doesn't get you in the mood for spring, we don't know what will.

Please take a minute to make a note of the directory changes and be sure and let Pat Lovejoy know when you have a change for the directory, especially e-mail changes since most of you receive your newsletter that way.

Membership Committee
Pat Lovejoy Donna Turner Jolene Hetrick

Intern Field Trip

On January 30, 2006, the fall 2005 Master Gardener Intern class took a field trip arranged by Bill Hall and Carolyn Critz.

We, along with Intern Advisor Judy Ratzlaff, traveled to Bat World in Mineral Wells and had an enjoyable and informative time learning about bats and their plight. We also toured the expansive and wonderful Clark Gardens.

After leaving the gardens we lunched at a small hometown restaurant and visited with our classmates. We stopped by E&R Gardens (also known as Esther Proctor's place) for a lesson in propagation. Boy does Esther know how to propagate.

On the way back to Fort Worth we could not pass up the opportunity to see the 900 year old pecan tree on the Finch property. We were lucky enough to have a photographer join us so we got a great picture with the tree as a group. (Thanks to Susan Miller and hubby Jay).

We returned to Ft. Worth after a relaxing and enjoyable day in the sunshine.

--- Jody Morris

Happy Birthday, Master Gardeners!

3-1 Susan Haynes, Linda Fogle
3-1 Betsy Norman
3-4 Robbie Crawford
3-5 Jody Morris and Charlotte Krystinik
3-6 Moria Brunken
3-9 Linda Williams
3-10 Susan Miller and Kay Lewis
3-11 Samantha Hosti
3-12 Rob Ross and Emily Ward
3-13 Pat Oliver
3-14 Mary Fuller
3-15 Millie Ruby
3-17 Judy Melton and Susanne Mills
3-26 Sharon Nice and Marshall Harris
3-28 JoAnn Perdue
3-29 Susan Stanek and Carol Lally
3-30 Dawn Hancock
3-31 Jo Poppelreiter and Kim Freeman.

This is a monthly feature. If your birthday is in this month and you don't see your name and date of birth, it is probably because LaVonne Nowlin does not have it.

Please email your birthday - month and day only - to lavonne@ev1.net.

Vendor Tables

If you are interested in reserving a vendor table to sell items at our March 2 meeting, please contact Jim Nelson by February 23.

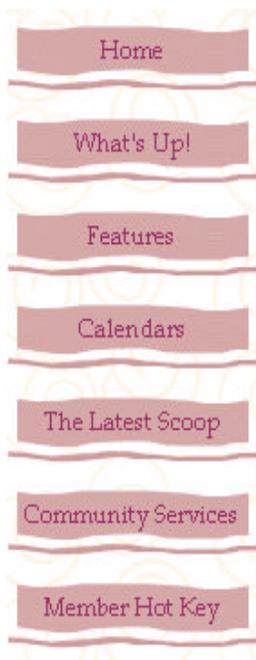
The cost per table is \$15 made payable to TCMGA. Thank you.

--- Joy Lease

NAVIGATING THE TCMGA WEBSITE (www.tcmga.org)

From Carolyn Barnard

Once you have entered the website, the buttons on the left side of the screen are your way to tap into important and interesting information about our organization and gardening in general.



The WELCOME page highlights the most current news and it is updated as frequently as needed. It will also point you to new information posted to the website with the series of buttons you need to click to get to the information. For example when you see this text:

“I'm sure we all feel we know GINGER BASON - but did you know that once she was ***? Check out her profile on FEATURES/MEET A MEMBER. (1/24)”**

Clicking on the FEATURES button and the MEET A MEMBER button will take you to Ginger's profile.

You may be most interested in the bottom button on this page “MEMBER HOT KEY”. Clicking this button will take you to information most important to our members. You will always find a link to the latest newsletter (Latest Newsletter). You can tell it is a link because it is a different color and when you pass your mouse over it, a hand icon appears.

Other available information on this page is:

[Link to telephone schedule](#)

[Link to Excel & PDF format timesheets](#)

[Link to Background Check form](#)

[Link to generate emails to Sunshine Committee and Membership Committee](#)

When you first click on the link to the Excel format timesheets you will be prompted for a logon and password. This is a problem with the vendor that hosts our website. If you just click 'CANCEL', Excel will launch and the form will be available for you to save on your PC.

Check the website weekly since information and features change on no particular schedule. Also, if you have any suggestions of things you would like to see or would like to help with the site, please email or call Carolyn Barnard

MG Directory March Updates

Directory changes:

On the committees page -
Change Publication Exchange to Publicity -
Ken Barham/Amanda Kowalski

Add Tammy Edwards to Publications/
Newsletter - Derald Freeman

Add: Joanne McClendon
4904 Courtside Dr.
Ft. Worth, TX 76133
817-292-5181 rip@cowtown.net

Change address for
Ashley Moncrief, 4632 Lafayette
Ft. Worth, TX 76107

Eleanor Tuck, 8328 Patreota Dr.
Benbrook, TX 76126

Add additional e-mail for
Marlene Deaton - mdbluestar@uwmail.com

Change Mary Benavides phone 817-292-9023
Note: Send updates to Pat Lovejoy
E-mail patlovejoy@att.net.

Speaker's Bureau Topics

The Education Committee has been defining areas of focused education within the Master Gardener group and Tarrant County. The Speaker's Bureau can provide speakers to garden clubs, civic organizations, and educational groups for March and April on these topics.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Annuals | Perennials |
| Butterfly gardens | Hummingbird gardens |
| Landscape design | Lawn care |
| Native plants | Organic gardening |
| Earth Kind Roses | Landscape Roses |
| Water conservation | Xeriscape |
- By Derald Freeman

Intern Scoop



And.....they're off! Like runners in a race, the 2006 Spring Interns have busted out of the starting blocks with enthusiasm, and they are well on their way to becoming Certified Master Gardeners.

On the first day of class the interns were welcomed by Judy Ratzlaff, our intern coordinator. Several Extension agents were on hand to explain the "big picture" of Extension. Ginger Bason and the TCMGA Board also welcomed the interns and encouraged them to get involved. Our fearless leader, Steve Chaney, had the honor of speaking at a Rose Symposium in Houston, and regretted not being with the interns on their first day.

Now more than halfway through their quest for knowledge, the interns have already learned the basics of horticulture and botany by dissecting with Dotty. They've learned proper plant material selections with Steve. Charlie Shiner has shared his passion of composting, and Dave Wilson whet their appetites with landscape design. Mike Merchant and Allan Eynon got them buzzing with bees, and Kim Engler inspired them with insects. "Information overload," you say? Not for this eager class of interns. They keep coming back for more! They are learning and they are having fun. And isn't that why we all wanted to join this illustrious group of gardeners?

Our new intern class is made up of unique individuals from varied backgrounds, some native Texans, some transplants, but they all have one thing in common: They all love gardening!

This great group of folks will be joining us for our monthly meeting in March, so please welcome them and encourage them in their endeavor. For some of us, it was just a few short months ago that we were in their shoes.

--- Toni Moorehead

FIGHT FIRES WITH GREEN

By Dotty Woodson

Grass fires have burned many acres and destroyed many homes. Are we safe in this urban area? The grass around our homes is just as much a tinderbox as the grass in rural areas. The dead brown grass in landscapes is like a layer of straw lying on the ground. The dead brown grass will dry out very quickly after irrigation because of the wind and low humidity. Irrigation does add moisture to the soil which provides some protection but the grass is still very flammable. A home in Grand Prairie was destroyed from sparks from an outdoor grill. A farmer told me the exhaust from his tractor started a fire. Another farmer told me a spark from his tractor hitting around piece of equipment started a fire.

Take precautions to protect your home from fire. Minimize any activity that can cause a spark. Most grass fires have started in rural interface areas with large acreage of dry dead grass. The wind has spread these fires at speeds of 20 to 50 miles an hour into homes and towns. The speed of these fires is much faster than anyone could out run. If you smell smoke, investigate immediately. The weather service has placed fire warnings on the emergency weather radio band. Keep you emergency radio on for fire alerts.

The lack of rain, low humidity and high wind speeds has created a tinderbox waiting for the spark. A spark can come from lightning, smothering cigarette carelessly thrown, exhaust from a tractor or car, fireworks, kids playing with matches, sparks burning trash or leaves, sparks from a train, sparks from an outdoor grill or even an indoor fireplace, welding torch, or propane torch sweating pipes. Once a fire starts, there is no ground moisture, no green grass, shrubs or trees to act as a firebreak. Many trees in non-irrigated area are so dry, the trees and other vegetation are burning also. A strong wind driven fire can travel so fast there is not much a homeowner can do to protect their home. If a fire in moving slowly, a homeowner

can call the fire department for help and turn on garden hoses to soak the ground and wet down the walls and roof. So be prepared with garden hoses already connected to all outdoor faucets. Remember smoke is very dangerous. Do not remain to fight a fire if the air is already thick with smoke.

Check these web sites for more information and suggestions:

<http://texashelp.tamu.edu>,

<http://www.tamu.edu/ticc>

<http://wildfires.tamu.edu/education.html>

Here is a list of a few things to do in your landscape in advance to lessen the threat of fire to your home from a wind driven wildfire:

1. Create a 5 to 10 foot green buffer between the dry grass and house with a foundation planting of evergreen broadleaf shrubs, winter annuals and/or evergreen ground-cover. A fast moving wind driven fire may go around a green landscape. Unfortunately, this will not help keep sparks off the roof or out of the trees. Keep your green buffer watered.
2. Cut all dead branches out of the trees and remove any tree limbs close to the roof.
3. Plant perennial rye grass and keep the rye grass green by watering through the winter. Green grass will slow and maybe smother a fire and therefore help protect your home.
4. Connect a garden hose to outdoor faucets. Make sure every outdoor faucet works.
5. Be prepared with a ladder tall enough to reach the roof.
6. Clean out the gutters and remove any leaves off the roof. The compost collecting in gutters is flammable.
7. Do not store any fire wood, lumber or other combustibles near the house.
8. Store gasoline in an approved safety can away from occupied buildings.
9. Check to make sure your chimney screen/spark arrestor is in tact.

(Continued on page 9)

10. Plan and rehearse an emergency exit plan for your family and plan rendezvous point on your property and also out of your neighborhood in case the neighborhood is evacuated.
11. Keep cell phones charged.
12. Check batteries in flashlights, cordless phones, portable radios, and fire detectors.
13. Install and keep batteries working in smoke detectors in or near each bedroom.

In rural areas:

1. Keep LPG tanks away from any building so you can shut off the valve in case of fire. Keep all flammable vegetation away from tank.
2. Make sure all water pumps work.
3. Clear a 10 foot fire break around all structures.
4. Create an external water supply for fire-fighting, such as cisterns, dry hydrants, and ponds. — Dotty Woodson

Winter Honeysuckle

If you missed the meeting last month you missed the chance to win a great mystery plant. It was a Winter Honeysuckle. Tammy Edwards won by figuring out the clues in the following poem written by Dr. Monte Swatzell.

*My common names are all rather selective
They are of seasonal or of physical description
My blooms and their aroma can actually be addictive
Tis shameful that they are of such short subscription*

*I'll never come on too strong, you'll see
Yet, at my best, I'll entice a crowd
Passerbys will rave and go on about me
While you are so smug and feeling proud*

*I'm hardy and tough and do adapt very well
Propagate me by clumps, cuttings or seed
May these past few words, within your mind, ring a bell
Then, think of my name and I will fill your need.*

Master Gardener Level II

Tarrant County Pilot Program

This is a pilot program for the Texas Master Gardener Associations, an opportunity to have a deeper understanding of Horticulture along with an opportunity to teach your fellow Master Gardeners.

This will be a series of 8 classes for a total of 6 hours each class period, with a total of 48 hours of advanced education. The anticipated dates and times will be listed below; they are subject to minor changes between now and then due to instructors needs.

The cost of this program will be \$125, your time on 8 days of instruction along with an additional 48 hours of volunteer service the first year. These 48 hours will be in addition to the required hours that TCMGA requires for re-certification. These 48 hours will consist of 24 hours in a teaching mode (to be determined upfront by you and me) and 24 additional hours in a normal volunteer setting.

There will be a 30 person maximum enrollment for this pilot class, please e-mail or write a letter stating your interest. The last day to register for this class will be on July 1st, 2006. This pilot class is open to certified Master Gardeners only in good standing with the association.

I look forward to hearing from you on your interest as well as any feedback you may have on the content of this pilot class.

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| 8/01/06 | Soils |
| 8/08/06 | Turf/Irrigation |
| 8/10/06 | Entomology |
| 8/15/06 | Arboriculture |
| 8/22/06 | Plant Pathology |
| 8/24/06 | Plant Propagation |
| 8/29/06 | Landscape Design |
| 8/31/06 | Communication/Teaching methods |

—Steve Chaney

Tarrant County Master Gardener Association
401 East Eighth Street
Fort Worth, Texas 76102-5504



Calendar of Upcoming Events

- Mar 10-12 Will Rogers Home & Garden Show
- Mar 11 Johnson County MG Lawn & Garden Show
- Mar 24 Weston Gardens docent training for TCMGA MG's
- Mar 25 Spring Yardsmart Seminar
- May 2-4 Pizza Ranch
- May 4-7 Mayfest
- May 4-6 Texas Master Gardener State Conference in College Station

—Steve Chaney

For up-to-the-minute TCMGA news visit: www.tcmga.org
More state news: www.texasmastergardeners.com