

Sharecropper

Tarrant County Master Gardener Association



FEBRUARY 2011

IN THIS ISSUE

Feature Article	1
President's Message	2
TCMGA Meeting Minutes	3
Rose Care	4-5
Announcements & Info	6-7
Alice Carlson Project	10-11
February 2011 Calendar	12
Upcoming Events	13
Entomology Update	14
Volunteer Opportunities	15
Important Resource Links	Back

If you have an idea or would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact

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**The February
TCMGA monthly
meeting will be
moved to the 2nd
Thursday, February
10, 2011 at 10AM.**

Roses: How to Plant

By Everett Janne, CEA (deceased)



Planning a rose garden? If this is your first attempt, begin on a small scale. A dozen well-cared-for plants will produce more flowers and give greater pleasure than 4 or 5 dozen poorly cared for plants that take all your space and time.

Locate the rose bed where it will receive at least 6 hours of full sun per day. Light afternoon shade can be tolerated and is often desirable during the hottest part of the summer. Heavily shaded areas will produce bushes that are rank and have few flowers. Mildew and black spot disease also are more prevalent in shaded areas.

Good air circulation is essential. It aids in the rapid evaporation of morning dew thereby aiding in disease control. Some protection from prevailing strong winds is desirable as it reduces damage to the flowers.

Avoid planting near trees and shrubs having vigorous root systems or provide some form of mechanical barrier against them. The rose root is a poor competitor against this type of intrusion.



Rosa Fortuniana

Try to locate the rose bed where it can be enjoyed from the interior of the home. Roses are deciduous and not very attractive during the dormant season. For this reason they should be visible while in bloom but should not be the dominant landscape element viewed from the window.

Good drainage, both surface and subsurface, is essential in a rose bed. Roses do not like "wet feet." Poor drainage usually can be corrected by installing a tile drain system, or by planting in raised beds using redwood or masonry framing. In much of the Gulf Coast area, the beds must be raised as much as 12 inches above the

(Continued on page 8)

President's Message

Dear Gardener Friends,



Wow! What a great kick-off for the **Tarrant County Master Gardeners** in the 2011. I hope you enjoyed the January meeting as much as I did. It was great to see old friends and greet new ones. The speaker was wonderful. We learned how to encourage the helpful wildlife and how to discourage those that are not. I don't live in an urban area any more, but it is good to know how to help our native wildlife in the always changing landscape.

Congratulations to the **2010 TCMGA Interns** who recently graduated to "blue badges!" They contributed a lot of hours last year and created a wonderful demonstration grassland area as their project. Many of them are already committed to working on various committees in the organization.

We could all learn from them. A great way to be involved in our organization is through serving on committees as well as working at the many projects. Make this the year you volunteer your MG time at different **MG projects.....don't forget to turn in your hours!**

Welcome to the new **2011 TCMGA Interns** too! They attended the monthly meeting with enthusiasm. They are eager to learn about the TCMGA. They took time to check out the new MG gear, support the raffle, learn from the speaker and meet other members.

Have you made your reservation to **attend the TMG State Conference in Glen Rose/Granbury on April 27 -29** yet? Consider car-pooling with friends if hotels are full. It will be here before you know it!

It's not too early to consider attending the **International Master Gardener Conference in October**. You may ask yourself, "Why would I want to attend an International Master Gardener conference?"

I asked this question too, but went with friends to the last one in Las Vegas. It was a hoot! There were speakers and topics we had not heard before, different landscapes, great food, MGs from other states and Canada and great ideas for our local association! Plus, we got to know some of our own TCMGA members a bit better too. Did I mention I learned to play poker there too?

Check out the IMGC website. The conference will be in **West Virginia** in a beautiful setting in the fall. The **International MG Conference** is held every other year....so don't miss this one. There is no telling what we will learn!

One more date to check on your calendar. The **February monthly meeting is moved** from the first Thursday to the second Thursday. The **TCMGA monthly meeting will be Thursday, February 10**. Same time, same location, just a different day!

Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Nancy Curl
President

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Minutes of the TCMGA General Meeting - *January 6, 2011*

President Nancy Curl called the business meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. There were 207 in attendance: 151 certified members (blue badges), 52 interns representing the 2010 and 2011 classes, and 4 guests. The required 15% of certified members (15% of 272 = 41) were in attendance to meet a quorum for voting purposes.

Bonnie Bradshaw, certified wildlife rehabilitator, licensed wildlife control operator and one of the founders of DFW Wildlife Coalition, spoke on "Critters in the Garden" in the morning session and provided effective human solutions to common wildlife problems in the afternoon session.

Representatives of the State Conference to be held in Glen Rose/Granbury addressed the membership on the benefits of attending the conference. The association with the highest number of members in attendance will receive a state award.

Rick Sapp, Project Manager for the FitKid Grant from the Extension provided an initial overview of the grant with the explanation that TCMGA members will be a part of the educational component to teach Fort Worth classroom teachers how to grow vegetables in "grow boxes" and to collaborate with them as they teach their students and parents to use them as well.

The December minutes were approved as published.

Committee Reports

John Stanley, Ways and Means, announced that a selection of items is available for purchase. Items purchased at the meeting will be available for pick-up at the February meeting or can be picked up at Red Dog Studio, if needed sooner. Payment is due when items are picked up.

The 2010 Treasury Report was presented by Nancy Curl on behalf of Pat Higgins, Treasurer, who was not present due to illness. A copy of the budget will be filed with these minutes for Audit.

Bill Vandever, Programs, announced the February speaker will be Wayne Pianta of Pan American Seed Company, a division of Ball Horticulture. Mr. Pianta will discuss what is new and being tested in trial gardens.

Nancy Curl introduced the Advisory Committee Chairs.

New time sheets are available on the website and take effect with the reporting of January, 2011 hours. Sheets are available at the sign-in table for those members who do not have internet access.

Wendi Carlucci, Awards Chair, summarized the Awards given at the December luncheon for the benefit of those members who were not able to attend. She also recognized the following winners, who did not claim their awards at the luncheon:

- MG with 500+ hours - Bill Hall
- Perfect Attendance (at all monthly meetings) – Dick Dobrovolny
- MG with the Most Variety of Activities – Steve Purdy
- Most Field Trip Expert – Mary Jane Goad

Wendi also informed the membership that calendars for 2011 were provided by Keep Southlake Beautiful, in appreciation to MGs for their work at Liberty Garden and Spin into Spring. Spin into Spring is scheduled for April 17, 2011. Interested volunteers should contact Wendi Carlucci.

JoAnn Hahn, State Director, reported on the December (State) meeting of Texas Master Gardeners Association. Charters are filed each year for chapters. Our area is well represented by the newly elected state officers. They are: Homer Babbitt (Parker County), Chris Oefinger (brother of TCMGA's Ben Oefinger), Ginger Bason (TCMGA), Dianne Bush, and Donna Hagar (Glen Rose).

This year we will submit applications in eight categories. Awards will be presented at the annual conference.

There was no unfinished old business.

Announcements

Steve Chaney announced that horticulture agents in the greater North Central Texas area will be presenting an EarthKind symposium on February 26, 2011, in Denton. Members are encouraged to attend.

Service pins are available for the classes of 2008 (3 years), 2006 (5 years), 2001 (10 years), 1996 (15 years) and 1991 (20 years)

Members were reminded that the February meeting will meet on the SECOND Thursday of the month, February 10, 2011.

The time and location remain unchanged. The annual Hot Dog Luncheon for new interns will be in March.

New Business

Nancy Curl presented the 2011 budget on behalf of Pat Higgins, Treasurer, with the assistance of Taddie Hamilton, Parliamentarian. The budget had already been presented to the Advisory Committee and Executive Board. It was approved by the Executive Board. The budget was projected on a screen for viewing and individual copies were distributed to the membership.

Nancy addressed questions, with the assurance to members that upon her return, Pat Higgins could explain the format and clarify any additional questions as needed. A motion was made to adopt the budget. Voice vote was taken and the "ayes" overwhelming carried the vote. The budget was approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Sue Ellen Schlitzer
Secretary



Rose Care and Fertilization

From aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu

Fertilization (Also consult the [American Rose Society: Fertilization](#) web site.)

Roses may be the flowers of love and romance, but there's nothing romantic about spindly canes sporting spider mites, beetles and mildew instead of beautiful flowers. Just as romance sometimes needs a little helping along, so do your roses. The bonus in keeping roses watered, fertilized, mulched and pruned is that the resulting healthy plants are less susceptible to pest attack.

There is perhaps less agreement about how, when and with what to feed roses than any other aspect of their care. If there is any recommendation resembling a consensus of opinion, it would be to feed the modern, repeat-bloom rose varieties first in the spring right after pruning. Next, feed when they have developed flower buds, and then again about two months before the first frost in your area. Gardens with fast-draining, sandy soil or those in southern climates are usually fed more frequently.

Use a commercial rose food or a general-purpose fertilizer like 10-10-10 or 5-10-10 for the first two feedings. A formulation like 0-10-10 is best for the last feeding before frost.

Apply the rose food as well as the water-soluble and foliar fertilizers available according to the manufacturer's directions. Dry fertilizers should be scratched into the soil beneath the leaves - but not touching the canes or bud union - and then watered in well.

The older varieties of roses that only bloom once a year should be fertilized one time in early spring. (For more information, see the [American Rose Society: Older varieties](#).)

Feeding and Spraying Roses in South Central Texas (Also consult the [American Rose Society: Spraying](#) web site.)

Your feeding program, like your spraying, should be done regularly. Roses are heavy feeders. To keep them growing vigorously, an organized program should be followed. Water rose bed thoroughly before and after food has been applied.

- **January thru February** -- As the weather and ground warm up, around mid to late February, organic fertilizers may be applied. Give each large bush, one to two cups of a mixture of alfalfa meal, cottonseed meal, fish meal and blood meal, scratch in lightly and water in well.
- **March thru May** -- The initial feeding should be chemical, either liquid or dry. It is applied when spring pruning is completed. Carl Pool, Green Light, Miracle-Gro, Peters or Rapid-Gro are all good soluble fertilizers. Give each Hybrid Tea or other large bush, one tablespoon of fertilizer

dissolved in a gallon of water.

- For miniatures use one teaspoon of liquid food per gallon of water. Give each plant about a quart. Dry rose fertilizer can be applied in place of liquid. Use according to directions. Liquid feeding in this period should be once a month. Mature climbers should be given double the amount given to Hybrid Teas.
- **June thru August** -- With the introduction of timed release fertilizers, a summer long feeding in one application is possible. These fertilizers are formulated to feed continuously for three to six months in our climate. Feed each average sized bush at least three or four ounces, working it lightly into the soil. Water thoroughly. If you don't care to use this type of product, continue feeding with a water soluble food (twice a month), or a monthly application of dry food. As the weather becomes hot, you may want to switch to soluble fertilizers as they are more readily available to the plants. Iron chlorosis occurs at this time; Sprint 330 can correct this deficiency.
- **September thru October** -- With the advent of cooler weather and rain, your roses will begin their heavy fall blooming season. Once you have done your light fall pruning, you can apply a cup of organic rose food per bush and follow this two weeks later with a liquid feeding. Don't feed with either liquid or dry foods after the beginning of October.
- After heavy rains, it is a good idea to give your bushes a supplemental liquid feeding.

With regard to spraying, prevention is critical in keeping your roses free of fungus and insect problems. A hit and miss program will get you and your roses into trouble. Basic spraying can be divided into three different phases.

- **March thru May** -- Once bushes have been pruned, a clean up spray consisting of Ortho Funginex and Malathion should be applied to both the bush and the ground area around the bush. This will take care of any over wintering fungus or insect problems. Once your new growth starts, spray every seven days with Funginex, a liquid product. This fungicide has three advantages over others in that it leaves no residue, protects against mildew, blackspot and rust and needs no sticker spreader. Rust is not a big problem in this area, but does appear on occasion. Spray top and bottom of the leaves until the foliage glistens to obtain complete coverage. If your bushes should become infected with either mildew or blackspot, spray every five days until control is obtained. Insecticides such as Diazinon or Orthene can be used about every 14 days to combat most insect problems that occur during this

Rose Care and Fertilization (cont'd)

period. Use according to label directions.

- **June thru August** - By this time of the year, if our weather is normally hot and dry, you can lengthen your spraying interval for fungus problems to every 10 to 14 days. Insecticides should be used sparingly. The biggest problem that may occur at this time is an infestation of spider mites. A good way to treat this problem is to apply a hard spray of water to the bottom of the foliage every three or four days throughout the summer. This will interrupt the mites' breeding cycle. (The bushes will also benefit from the washing). A miticide such as Green Light Red Spider Spray may also be used.
- **September thru November** - Once the weather begins to cool off and the early morning and nights become more humid, follow the same spray program used during the spring for both fungus and insect problems. To prevent spray bum of foliage in all seasons, water rose beds thoroughly before spraying. In hot weather, spray in early morning or late evening when temperatures are cooler.
- When spraying, it is very important to wear protective clothing; this should include a chemical spray mask, gloves and a long sleeved garment.

Mulch

Using mulch, especially an organic one, is about the closest thing possible to a garden panacea. A mulch keeps weeds to a minimum, the soil moist and loose and adds nutrients.

Apply mulch in the spring just as the soil warms and before weeds start coming up. Mulch can also be applied anytime during the growing season if the weeds are removed and the surface lightly cultivated. Spread 2 to 4 inches of mulch over the bed, leaving some space open around the base of each rose. Replace the mulch as it deteriorates during the year.

For organic mulches, you'll want to use whatever is locally available and cheap. Some options include wood chips and shavings, shredded bark, pine needles, or chopped oak leaves. Extra nitrogen fertilizer may be needed when these mulches are first applied. Mixtures of materials are usually more satisfactory as they have less tendency to pack down and, moreover, permit easy transmission of water and fertilizers. Many compost mixtures are available -- also a light layer of manure may be applied under the mulch.

Watering

Adequate soil moisture is indispensable to the vitality

of roses. (For more information, see the [American Rose Society: Watering](#)) Seldom can you rely on the natural rainfall to be adequate. The rule-of-thumb is 1 inch of water each week, but the actual frequency of watering will depend on your soil and climate as well as the age of the plant.

The goal is to slowly water until the soil is soaked 12 to 18 inches deep. Soaker hoses or a hose with a bubbler attachment are inexpensive solutions and keep water from splashing onto foliage and spreading diseases. Soil-level and drip-irrigation systems are more expensive but make watering a breeze.

Pruning (For more information, see [American Rose Society: Pruning](#)).

Pruning controls the size and shape of roses and keeps the modern varieties blooming repeatedly all summer long, as they flower on new growth. The supplies you'll need include a good, sharp, curved-edge pruning shears; long-handled lopping shears; a small pruning saw; plus a pair of leather gardening gloves.

Well-established varieties of modern rose bushes such as hybrid teas, floribundas, and grandifloras should receive a major pruning each spring after the winter protection has been removed and just as the buds begin to swell (usually about when daffodils bloom). Harsh pruning makes bigger, but fewer blooms. And, there is no report that anyone ever killed a plant with a pair of pruning shears.

All that's needed otherwise during the growing season is to remove and destroy any diseased foliage or canes and to dead head, or remove the faded flowers, cutting their stems just above the first leaf with five leaflets.

Most old-fashioned and species roses as well as the climbers that bloom only once a year flower on wood from the previous year's growth. They are pruned right after flowering.

Practically all rose plants are budded on a special root, or understock. Occasionally you may find a sucker, or shoot, growing from this root stock itself. These sucker canes can usually be identified by the different leaf size and coloring. Remove sucker growth by cutting the canes off as close to the root stock trunk as possible.

Earth-Kind roses: Belinda's Dream, Cecile Bruner & Spice



Master Gardener Announcements & Information

HELP WANTED!

Tarrant County Master Gardener
TCU Education & TCMGA Education Coordinators
At the TCMGA Garden @ The Resource Connection

Wanted: Master Gardener to coordinate and facilitate classes for TCU Nutrition students at the TCMGA Community Demonstration Garden at the Resource Connection. Coordinator will work with Dr. Lyn Dart and Master Gardener specialists in setting up classes for Junior and Senior TCU Nutrition students. Classes meet once a week for 6 weeks. There will also be some coordination of hands-on learning in the various gardens at the TCMGA Garden.

Wanted: Master Gardener to coordinate and facilitate classes for Master Gardeners and the general public at the TCMGA Community Demonstration Garden at the Resource Connection. Coordinator will work with Master Gardener specialists and Steve Chaney in setting up classes throughout the year. Generally, classes are offered once or twice a month. Topics vary, depending upon time of year and specialists availability. Classes provide 2 hours of CEU credit to Master Gardeners who attend the classes.

For more information contact: Nancy Curl
nl_curl@yahoo.com

TCMGA Scholarship

Did you know that TCMGA offers two \$500 academic scholarships?

Requirements for the scholarship include:

- Be a Texas resident
- Be a sophomore or have 24 credit hours or above with at least a 2.8 GPA.
- Be studying on a full-time basis during the 2011 academic year at a Texas institution (full time enrollment is defined as a minimum of 12 hours for an undergraduate, 9 hours for a graduate student).
- Major in Horticultural Sciences or Landscape Design.

If you know of someone interested in applying for this scholarship, please have them contact Devanie Fergus.



Raffle: What to do with those “not-so-right” gifts you received for Christmas? We’ve got the answer! Re-gift them to the TCMGA Raffle! What a great idea! Just bring them to the next TCMGA meeting on February 10th and see your “not-so’right” gifts get put to good use! As always, the Raffle committee appreciates all donations.

Caladium Bulb Sale—February 10th

At the February 10th and March 3rd Master Gardener meetings we will be taking orders for Caladium Bulbs to be delivered at the April MG meeting. Four varieties will be offered for order. These varieties are: Candidum Classic White, White Queen, Red Flash and Carolyn Whorton.

The bulbs will be #1 variety and will be purchased from the same source that we used in 2010. The performance last year of all varieties was excellent.

The price per bulb will be 60 cents this year. No limit on quantities per order. Make sure you place your order at the February/March meeting. Orders cannot be accepted after that meeting. Your complete order must be paid for by cash or check at the time of ordering.

If you have any questions, call Linda Hawkins at 817-791-4295.

John Stanley
2nd VPresident

Candidum
Classic White

White Queen



Carolyn Whorton

Red Flash

Master Gardener Announcements & Information

TCMGA February Meeting Guest Speaker

Wayne Pianta works for one of the largest breeders of ornamental plant products in the world, Pan American Seed. A division of Ball Horticulture, Pan American Seed has plant breeding and development organizations around the world. As a Product Technical Specialist, Wayne works with many universities, trial Gardens, botanical gardens and arboretums to test and evaluate new products for suitability and adaptation to regional environments around the United States. He also works with a network of the largest wholesale producers and retailers of ornamental plants to introduce these products to consumers through the various market outlets.

With a bachelor and master degree in Horticultural Science from Texas A&M University, Wayne has worked in the ornamental plant industry for almost thirty years.

The Master Gardener organization has been a continuous thread throughout his career from his work with volunteers at the Tyler Rose Garden to the times he worked with Master Gardeners with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, to the present where Master Gardeners represent a key component in the success of the public garden and university trial programs.

Wayne has found that the learning curve in horticultural pursuits is a long and continuous one. He proclaims himself a constant student of the trends in plants, gardening and the horticulture industry.

**Bill Vandever,
1st Vice President**

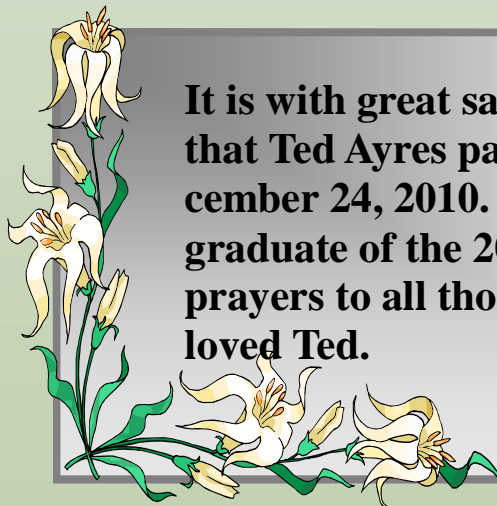


HAPPY BIRTHDAY GARDENERS!

February Birthdays

- 1 Charlie Shiner, Kay Gunn
- 4 M.J. Martinez, Phyllis White
- 7 Pat Lovejoy
- 10 Robin Danford
- 11 Leonora Alvarez del Castillo,
Sherry Flowers, Joyce Wuetig
- 12 Greta Beckler, Louise Kelly-Bellew
- 14 Sue Ellen Schlitzer
- 15 Bea Stevenson
- 16 Peg Surber
- 17 Ed Vaughan, Laura Lowe
- 20 Terri Mann
- 25 Evaline Woodrey
- 26 Molly Hollar
- 27 Edith Pewitt, Judi Martin
- 29 Toni Hernandez

If your birthday is this month and you don't see it, please contact **Doris Hill, (817) 337-8484** or email **artanddorishill@verizon.net**.



It is with great sadness, we report that Ted Ayres passed away December 24, 2010. Ted was a graduate of the 2006 class. Our prayers to all those who knew and loved Ted.

Roses: How to Plant (cont'd)

surrounding soil surface to provide the necessary drainage. Although a fertile soil is highly desirable, most soils can be modified and improved with the addition of organic matter or compost, and nutrients.

Soil preparation

For best results, begin the actual bed preparation 3 to 5 months before the anticipated planting date.

1. Remove surface vegetation from the selected area.
2. Spread 2 to 4 inches of sterilized cattle or sheep manure, composted organic matter, sawdust, shredded bark or a combination of these over the area.
3. Add superphosphate at the rate of 6 to 8 pounds per 100 square feet of bed area.
4. Spade these materials into the soil to a depth of 12 to 14 inches.

Wet down the area and work once a month until planting time. Do not work soil while it is wet.

Remove one plant at a time from the bucket, planting it before removing the next one. Cut off all damaged or broken roots with a sharp knife or pruning shears. Trim off the tip of all other roots about 1 inch to encourage new feeder root development. If the plant has a large root system, enlarge the



hole rather than cutting the roots to fit the hole.

Caution – do not attempt to plant when soil is wet. The soil is too wet if it can be pressed into a ball that will not crumble when you attempt to pick it up with the thumb and forefinger.

After the roots are covered with soil, fill the hole with water and allow it to drain away; then refill with water. After the water is drained away the second time, fill the hole with soil, mounding it slightly above the bed level to allow for settling. At this point the base of the bud union should be about 2 inches above the soil level.

If soil settling causes the bud union to sink lower than 2 inches above the bed level, raise it to the proper height by gently pulling the plant up with a pumping motion.

In the upper Panhandle, the bud union should be placed slightly below the soil level to protect it from severe winter cold. Dig the hole slightly deeper and keep the top of the soil mound about 5 inches below the bed level.

Using soil from your compost heap or from another portion of the garden, form a mound around the plant as much as 6 inches above the bud union. The mound of soil will protect the canes from desiccation by wind and sun until the roots have a chance to grow. In the spring when growth is well started, carefully remove the soil mound from the bed area.

When planting is complete, the canes should be cut back to 8 to 10 inches above the ground. Sometimes this pruning has already been done by the nursery or other source. Select a point about 1/4 inch above an outside bud and with sharp pruning shears make a slanting cut. Remove any weak or spindly growth arising from the base of the canes prior to the placement of

(Continued on page 9)

Roses: How to Plant (cont'd)

the protective soil mound.

If the existing soil is extremely poor or no surface soil exists, it is sometimes advantageous to excavate and replace the existing soil with a prepared soil. This should be a last resort, however, as often more problems are created than solved with this procedure.

Roses prefer slightly acid soil with a pH range of 6.0 to 6.5. If the soil is on the alkaline side, the addition of 2 pounds of agricultural sulfur per 100 square feet should be worked into the bed along with the organic matter. Repeat this application to the surface of the bed each spring or as soil tests indicate.

A soil sample can be taken and a soil test made to determine fertilizer needs of the soil. Your county agricultural agent or your fertilizer dealer can supply you with information on how to have the soil tested.



Planting time

The planting season is governed by the availability of dormant rose bushes. Depending upon weather conditions, plants in most of the commercial rose production areas are not ready to dig until mid-November and early December. Roses dug before this time are usually green and do not transplant readily. In most areas of Texas they may be planted as soon as sound, fully dormant bushes become available. In the far West and in the Panhandle planting should take place in mid or late February. The advantage of late fall or early winter planting is that the roots can become estab-

lished before warm weather forces top growth.

If weather conditions are unfavorable or if for any reason the plants cannot be planted as soon as received from the store, nursery, or mail order house, take steps to prevent drying out of the root system and keep the plants in a cool location. Refrigeration at 35 to 40 degrees F is ideal if a high humidity can be maintained.

Spacing rose plants

Hybrid tea and grandiflora roses usually are spaced 24 to 36 inches apart depending upon the vigor of the individual variety and the effect desired in the rose bed. Floribundas usually are spaced 18 to 24 inches apart. If two parallel rows of plants are to be placed in a bed, the bed should be at least 5 feet wide with a minimum of 3 feet between rows. Allow 4 to 5 feet of walk area between beds to facilitate maintenance and care.

Planting bare-root roses

Soak the roots of the rose plants in a bucket or tub of water for several hours before planting or wrap the plants in clean wet sacks to allow the roots and stems to absorb all the moisture they can.

Dig individual holes at least 12 to 24 inches deep and 16 to 18 inches in diameter depending on the size of the root system. Replace the soil in the hole so that it comes to within 8 inches of the top. Firm the soil with the hands, then form a mound or cone of soil in the center of the hole with the top of the cone about 3 inches below bed level. Check this by placing a stick or shovel handle across the top of the hole.

Alice Carlson—Nutritional Education “Circle of Life”

Written by Sharon Chastain, Alice Carlson Project Lead, Photos by Sharon Chastain

“Do you have a recipe for Swiss Chard?”

That’s not a question you expect from a third grade student, but at Alice Carlson Applied Learning Center students and teachers are investigating ways to cook and eat a wide variety of fall vegetables, including many they have never tried before. The story of this school and their vegetable garden is one that demonstrates how Master Gardeners working together can have a significant impact in the lives of children.

Last spring Master Gardeners at Alice Carlson completely rebuilt vegetable beds with funds from a Tarrant County Public Health grant. The purpose of the grant was to improve childhood education about nutrition. The grant allowed us to build raised beds with Windsor Stone walls and to purchase a rich soil/compost mixture to fill them. Master Gardener Jim Nelson secured this grant and led the team of Master Gardeners who renovated the beds. Over the summer Jim also reworked the drip irrigation system so the beds would be ready for fall planting.



In August Claire Alford and her propagation team, working in the Resource Connection greenhouse, began propagating vegetable seeds provided by Sharon Chastain, the project chair at Alice Carlson. The goal was to have enough plants for every child in the school to be able to plant at least one vegetable. Fall vegetable sets normally become available too late in the school year and are too expensive to be widely used by the students. By starting from seeds, Master Gardeners were able to provide 327 plants which were available at the correct planting time, and were affordable, providing a unique opportunity for a spectacular fall garden. Every day this fall Alice Carlson students were watering and cultivating lush beds filled with mustard greens, bok choy cabbage, kale, cauliflower, broccoli, Swiss chard, parsley, corn mache, and sorrel.

It is widely recognized that children will often eat unfamiliar vegetables if they grow them, but there are also proven academic benefits to a school garden. Before planting, students measured and mapped the available beds. In the school there is a large map illustrating apportionment of the beds to the various classes. Master Gardeners worked with some classes to guide them in correct planting techniques. In



some cases older students then passed on this expertise by working with younger children, guiding them in removing plants from the pots and showing them the correct way to plant. In all, 66 fifth graders and 66 fourth graders planted vegetables. One fourth grade class helped 66 second graders and 22 third-graders plant their vegetables. A dozen first graders also participated in planting. This made a total of 232 students who grew vegetables this fall, a truly remarkable success story!



Most classes researched the vegetable variety they elected to grow, learning about its horticultural requirements on the Internet. One class posted the results of their research for the public in the display case adjacent to the vegetable garden, one of two designed by Jim Nelson and built by Jack Gerloff. Proceeds from TCMGA's raffle ticket sales helped pay for these handsome cases.

Each plant was identified with a stake with the name of the child who planted it. Children measured and recorded plant growth in their science journals. Some classes wrote narratives and poems featuring their plants.. (We look forward to reading the adventures of "Charley the Chard.") The students monitored insect activity and investigated organic strategies to keep their bok choy from being nibbled. They also learned

about the life cycle of plants, photosynthesis and soil chemistry.

As the time to harvest some of the vegetables approached, there were lively discussions in the classrooms about utilizing the produce. Some groups wanted to share the produce and perhaps donate it to the Food Bank of Fort Worth. Some classes opted to cook their vegetables in the classroom and eat them immediately. Students cleaned and chopped the vegetables, then cooked them in crock pots and electric skillets. During the weeks preceding Thanksgiving the Carlson halls were filled with the aroma of sautéed mustard greens, kale soup and bok choy salad.

When Sharon Chastain met with some of the students after their harvest, they were proud of the fact that their greens were healthier and more nutritious than those found at a grocery. Although many admitted they rarely eat green vegetables, there were definitely some enthusiastic converts to these new foods. Later some of the teachers confessed they had never eaten some of these vegetables either!

Like many garden tales this story ends with compost. As Debbie Gerwick, a Carlson teacher wrote, "My students had the opportunity to prepare bok choy, eat it, and then take the leftover stems and put them in the worm bins in my class. Many students shared that this was like the circle of life."



February 2011 Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 <i>8a Randall Mill PK Greenhouse</i> 8:30a CG Veggie <i>9a CG Propagation Work Day</i> <i>9a CG Rose Garden Work Day</i>	2 <i>8a BG Perennial</i> <i>9a Veterans Park</i> <i>9a Teen Challenge</i> <i>9a CG Herb Work Day</i> 9:30a Thistle Hill <i>1:30p Veterans Park</i> <i>3:15p Fitzgerald</i>	3 <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>8:30a BG Trial</i>	4	5 <i>9am Compost Demo—Veterans Park</i> Wildscape Class 9a —Bugs, What Would We Do Without Them
6	7 <i>8:30a Heritage Elem.</i> <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>10a Union Gospel</i> <i>2:45p Heritage Elem</i>	8 <i>8a Randall Mill PK Greenhouse</i> 8:30a CG Veggie <i>9a CG Propagation Work Day</i> <i>9a CG Rose Garden Work Day</i>	9 <i>8a BG Perennial</i> <i>9a Veterans Park</i> <i>9a Teen Challenge</i> <i>9a CG Herb Work Day</i> <i>1:30p Veterans Park</i> <i>3:15p Fitzgerald</i>	10 <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>8:30a BG Trial</i> 10a TCMGA MTG 7P NPSOT MTG	11 <i>8:30a JPS Meditation Garden</i>	12 <i>9am Compost Demo—River Legacy</i> <i>9am SW Crthse</i>
13	14 <i>8:30a Heritage Elem</i> <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>10a Union Gospel</i> <i>2:45p Heritage Elem</i> 	15 <i>8a Randoll Greenhs</i> 8a Liberty Garden 8:30a CG Veggie <i>9a CG Propagation Work Day</i> <i>9a CG Rose Garden Work Day</i>	16 <i>8a BG Perennial</i> <i>9a Veterans Park</i> <i>9a Teen Challenge</i> <i>9a CG Herb Work Day</i> 9:30a Thistle Hill <i>9a FW Hulen Library</i> <i>1:30p Veterans Park</i> <i>3:15p Fitzgerald</i>	17 <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>8:30a BG Trial</i>	18	19
20	21 <i>8:30a Heritage Elem</i> <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>10a Union Gospel</i> <i>2:45p Heritage Elem</i>	22 <i>8a Randoll Greenhs</i> 8:30a CG Veggie <i>9a CG Propagation Work Day</i> <i>9a CG Rose Garden Work Day</i>	23 <i>8a BG Perennial</i> <i>9a Veterans Pk</i> <i>9a Teen Challenge</i> <i>9a CG Herb Work Day</i> <i>9a Bob Jones Nature</i> 9am SW Crthse <i>1:30p Veterans Park</i> <i>3:15p Fitzgerald</i>	24 <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>8:30a BG Trial</i>	25 <i>8:30a JPS Meditation Garden</i>	26 8:30a Earth-Kind Symposium  <small>How to Make Your Landscape Earth-Kind Saturday, February 26, 2011 • 8:30am - 4:30pm 20000 Highway 100, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77058 Reservations are required. Space is limited. For more information, please call 281-461-1111.</small>
27	28 <i>8:30a Heritage Elem</i> <i>8:30a Alice Carlson</i> <i>10a Union Gospel</i> <i>2:45p Heritage Elem</i>					

2011 Up-Coming Events



Upcoming Events

Speaker Schedule for Fort Worth H & G Show - Jan. 21 - Jan. 23

Friday, Jan. 21 - Compost & How to Make a Compost Tea
Charlie Shiner & Bill Hall

Saturday, Jan 22- Seed Propagation and How to Make Seed Tape
Donna Fry and LaVonne Nowlin

Sunday, Jan. 23- How to Make a Rain Barrel
Ron and Sue Ellen Schlitzer/Nancy Curl
- Seed Propagation and How to Make Seed Tape
Claire Alford and LaVonne Nowlin

Signature Super Grow XLV Tree Planting Event

Friday, Jan., 21— 10a, Contact Matt Churches at matt.churches@arlingtontx.gov to volunteer.

March 26 - March 27—[Fort Worth Orchid Society Sale](http://www.fwbgo.org) at Fort Worth Botanic Garden—Saturday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Sunday 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.. Go to www.fwbgo.org for more information.



Hello Gardeners,

It may be chilly outside, we're busy thinking about Spring and making plans for our new event; [The Garden Show](#). We want to be sure you save that date for this event **March 26-27**. Organized by the Collin County Master Gardeners, proceeds from this event will help fund horticulture related educational programs and demonstration gardens that we share with the community. We thought you might want to read the press release about this exciting event.



Texas Master Gardener Association
2011 State Conference
April 27-29, 2011
Glen Rose, Tx
Co-Hosted by
Somervell County Master Gardeners and Lake Granbury Master Gardeners

COME TO THE COUNTRY Somethin' You'll Never Forget!

2011 Texas Master Gardener Conference
April 27-29, 2011
at the Somervell County Expo Center
in beautiful Glen Rose, Texas!

co-hosted by
Somervell County Master Gardeners
and Lake Granbury Master Gardeners

Registration is til March 15!



The West Virginia University Extension Service
and
West Virginia Master Gardener Association
invite you to join them at the
2011 International Master Gardener Conference
to be held **October 11-14, 2011**
in Charleston, West Virginia.

Entomology Committee Update

Written By Lance Jepson, Entomology Specialist, Reviewed by Theresa Thomas



Have you heard that the Raspberry Crazy Ants are in Houston and threatening the northern counties? Our Office Entomology Committee is interested in all the bugs we have in Texas, approximately 30,000 spe-

cies. Diagnosis of insect problems is both a science and an art that requires a logical approach to problem identification, good detective skills and most of all access to resources and reference materials.

As part of an effort to improve the Master Gardener files, Steve Cheney requested the Entomology Committee, comprised of Linda Hawkins, Karen Simons and Lance Jepson, update the office entomology files. We have researched the "Insects in the City" files, the Horticulture Department Files and the Fire Ant Research Project Files and found over 150 new or current publications that are not in our files. We are working to bring you a better collection of publications to answer entomology questions. To assist in this arduous effort, we have added Maggie Camperlengo and Theresa Thomas, both from the class of 2009, to the committee. Theresa is a recent graduate of the Entomology Specialist Course. We are developing an index system and intend to have an up-to-date reference system, with a .pdf document available for each publication, in the near future.

One of our recent activities is a study of insect calls during phone duty. Within this study, we found that nearly one third of the total calls received were about insects, thus making entomology extremely important to Master Gardeners. A comparison of phone call data collected between 11/2006 and 3/2010, to phone call data

collected during the last year, determined we get approximately 3,000 phone calls a year. Of those 3,000 calls, about 30 percent were related to potentially nasty bugs. Over the past three years there was an average of 291 telephone calls per month or 14 calls per day. 1,821 calls received were regarding insects. Turf and garden insects comprised the greatest number (1,129) of these calls.

The committee will develop a presentation for Master Gardeners to assist in responding to insect questions. Some topics that will be included are:

1. Insect identification,
2. Insect Control using both organic and inorganic methods,
3. How to access insect information,
4. How to use the Texas A & M Website and Entomology Department and
5. How to use Texas A & M publications.

In addition, we recently met with our Dallas Entomologist, Dr. Mike Merchant. He reviewed the progress of our committee work and taught us how to use his new Website "Insects in the City." The site includes links to many of the different Extension insect publications, resources and information for teachers and students of entomology. You may subscribe to the Insect Updates to receive all new posts by Dr. Merchant at <http://citybugs.tamu.edu/>.

What are the most common questions on insects? Per our call history, we have nearly 8,000 problems identified by the phone callers and MG's. Is it Bees? Flies? Or Fleas? Silverfish, Earwigs or Springtails? We do not have the answer to this question yet. Our classification of Entomology publications effort will assist in answering this question.

Volunteer Opportunities for TCMGA

Project Code & Name	Work Days/Times	Project Manager	Phone
301 BRIT Activities	Call Chairman	Kay Yount	817-292-7690
302 BG Perennial Garden	Wed. 8:00 am	Cindy Woelke	817-366-4436
302 BG Trial Garden	Thurs. 8:30-11:30am	Susan Miller semiller@sbcglobal.net	817-261-1420
303 Community Garden			
Community and Demo Garden Chair	Steve Chaney, s-chaney@tamu.edu		817-884-1945
Project Leads			
Barn Beds	Charlotte Berck, caberck@dot11net.		817-426-6417
Compost & Rainwater Harvesting	Ron & Sue Ellen Schlitzer, s.schlitzer@sbcglobal.net		817-294-1329
Community Vegetable Beds	Bill Vandever, bvandever@sbcglobal.net		817-244-1580
Demonstration and Enabling Beds	Kim Freeman bamagirlntx@sbcglobal.net		817-292-3775
Education	Nancy Curl, nl_curl@yahoo.com		817-319-1795
Education – TCU	Pat Higgins, ragdollpatb@sbcglobal.net		817-946-6278
Enabling Garden	TBA		
Greenhouse/Propagation	Claire Alford, caagardner@aol.com		817-481-8861
Herb Garden, Wednesdays	Rita Hottel, aescom@charter.net		817-295-2883
Hospitality (Cook-outs)	Beverly Beazley, babeazley@tx.rr.com		817-483-7080
Orchard	Renee Beckum, jrbeckum@sbcglobal.net		817-790-8575
Perennial Garden	Ginger Bason & Joann Hahn, gbason@hotmail.com, joannhahn@att.net	817-838-7321/817-923-9250	
Plant Sales	Carol Lally & Linda Winn lallyca@sbcglobal.net, mwinnclan@aol.com	817-656-2736/817-581-4486	
Potting Shed	Pat Lovejoy, palovejoy@att.net		817-447-7924
Rain Barrel Construction	Claudia Teague, cteague@flash.net		817-444-2247
Rose Garden, Tuesdays	Nan Garvin, garbre@hotmail.com		817-477-2867
Topiary (children's garden)	Peg Surber, txsurber@aol.com		817-232-5035
Treasurer	Donna Morris, morrisd1@swbell.net		817-560-7767
304 Thistle Hill	1 st , 3 rd Weds. 9:30 am	Emily Ward	817-281-5925
304 Union Gospel Mission	Mon. 10 am	Gay Larson	817-441-6560
304 Teen Challenge	Wed. 9 am	Debbie Bollinger	817-498-1508
304 JPS Meditation Garden	2nd & 4th Fri. 8:30am	Bernice Ransbottom	817-485-6631
203 Grapevine Botanic Garden			
Docents	Call Chairman	Shari Stanfield	817-685-9990
<u>Environmental Projects:</u>			
305 Composting Demo	1st Sat., Veterans Pk, Arlington 2 nd Sat., River Legacy, Arlington	LaVonne Nowlin Charlie Shiner	817-581-1850 817-488-6123
305 FW Library at Hulen St.	3rd Wed. 9 am	Evaline Woodrey	817-295-5281
305 SW Sub-Courthouse	2 nd Sat., last Wed. 9 am	Gailon Hardin	817-475-0923
305 Southlake Liberty Garden	Call Chairman 2nd Tues., 8-11 am	Wendi Carlucci	817-488-5640
305 Veterans Park-Wildscape	Tues. 9-12pm Randoll Mill Pk. Wed. 9-12pm, 1:30pm-4pm 1st Sat., 9-12 pm	Greenhouse Nancy Swan	817-535-9991
305 Bob Jones Nature Center	3rd, Wednesday, 9 am	Nancy Searl	817-542-3190
<u>School Gardens:</u>			
306 Alice Carlson OLE	Mon. & Thurs. 8:30 am	Sharon Chastain	817-926-2575
306 Fitzgerald OLE	Wed. 3:15 pm	Leeann Rosenthal	817-237-7180
306 Heritage School OLE	Mon. 8-10am	Jackie Peel	817-581-0977

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



Important Websites to Know!



Our local TCMGA website:	<u>http://www.tarrantmg.org/</u>
State MG Website and TMG news:	<u>http://www.texasmastergardeners.com</u>
State Newsletter:	<u>http://www.tmganewsletter.org</u>
Our RC Demo Garden Website:	<u>http://www.localharvest.org/member/M27123</u>
Native Plant Society of Texas	<u>http://txnativeplants.org</u>
Aggie Horticulture:	<u>http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu</u>
Earthkind:	<u>http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind</u>
Texas Superstars:	<u>http://texassuperstar.com</u>
Fort Worth Botanic Garden:	<u>http://fwbg.org</u>
Wildscape:	<u>http://thewildscape.org</u>
Urban Solution Center:	<u>http://urbansolutioncenter.tamu.edu</u>
Botanical Research Institute of Texas:	<u>http://www.brit.org</u>