



MG Grapevine



<http://scmg.tamu.edu>

May 2017

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SCMG Association Meeting

May 4th

At the Tyler Water Plant
11:30 AM

MG Grapevine Staff

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SCMG Association Meeting

May 4, 2017

The speaker for Thursday, May 4 is Donn Bryan. His subject is Monarch Butterflies. We will be meeting at the Tyler Water Plant. The address is: 14792 County Road 192, 75703.

Directions to the Water Plant:

- * Travel west on Grande Blvd., crossing Old Jacksonville Rd. and go 0.7 mile,
- * At the yellow flashing light, turn left onto County Rd. 192 (Old Noonday Rd.),
- * Continue 1.6 miles to 14792 CR 192, on the right.

For the June meeting (Thursday, June 1) we will have our business meeting at the Rose Garden.

Following the short business meeting those wanting to visit Waldo Way Guernsey Farm in Mineola we will depart at that time. It is recommended we carpool and minimize the number of vehicles.

Waldo Way is a robotic dairy farm. The cows go the barn to get milked when they want. The robot cleans them, milks then evaluates the milk and the cow goes happily back to the pasture.

I will be asking for a tentative headcount at our May meeting. If you have questions please call. There are a couple of recommended restaurants in Mineola that we could eat at if anyone wants to do so.

If you do not want to go to Waldo Way, we will have our own Ed Bryan speaking at the Rose Garden.

Wayne Elliott

Susan Stone Sez....



This year is off to a busy start....but so far smooth sailing and no big surprises. All MG projects are moving along nicely. We also have a couple of new initiatives underway (Bylaws revisions and the Scholarship policy and fund) that will enhance our operations. We will soon be awarding some milestone certificates to some deserving members who have achieved 15 and 20 years of service. And Greg is working with a youth garden in the Brick Streets area...when he's not planting amid the cracks in the asphalt.

For my part, most of my planting is done except for a new bed I'm putting in... which at this rate may not get planted until Fall. It's a bit of guerrilla gardening, to borrow a phrase. And things are blooming now, although a little early for some of it. Best news of all, the plant I adopted from Greg is going to bloom. It has two bloom stalks and I'm eagerly awaiting their birth. I hope they measure up to others I've seen (Wayne's and Betty's). I'd about given up on it, as it was pretty bedraggled most of the Winter. But, gardeners don't give up easily, right?

Remember we will be traveling to the Tyler Water Plant for our May meeting. It's a good facility with plenty of parking. Although someone got rear-ended the last time we were out there, so be careful.

Hope to see you at our monthly meeting, May 4.

Susan Stone, President

From Bulbs to Blooms

By Greg Grant

I recently ran across a press release I wrote for one of the early Smith County Master Gardener bulbs sales where I was not only the speaker but a provider of bulbs as well. Ed McGee and I have been friends for a long time and I was his advisor on the bulb sale. I'm not sure how many of you know that I had a wholesale bulb farm for about 20 years, producing 'Grand Primo' narcissus, Texas star jonquil, Campernelle jonquil, oxblood lily, blue Roman hyacinth, red spider lily, peppermint spider lily, St. Joseph's lily, copper lily, and Byzantine gladiolus. I was the only producer in the world of most of these and was a provider to Old House Gardens for years along with Dr. Welch's annual Oktober Gartenfest, and Plant Delights mail order nursery in North Carolina. As a matter of fact, if you look on the cover of Tony Avent's Plant Delights 25th anniversary catalog you'll see my smiling face at the top, holding a bulb. Each heirloom bulb was collected early in my life, properly identified, and eventually multiplied into production blocks. When all my spine surgeries started I decided it best to sell the stock to my buddy Chris Wiesinger and his Southern Bulb Company.

But now that I've joined the Smith County Master Gardener team and the fall bulb sale again, it's time for me to get back into production. I will of course provide the bulbs for free but will need some help. In addition to a long history of bulb production I also have a long history with specialty sales and marketing going all the way back to my training days under Dr. Jerry Parsons in San Antonio, the CEMAP (now Texas Superstar) program, my time as Director of Product Development at Lone Star Growers (now Color Spot), and the last ten years at SFA Gardens where we'd sell \$50,000 on a single Saturday morning each spring.

Since I'm well known for new introductions, accurate identification, quality plants, and bulbs in general, we have high



standards to uphold with our bulb sale as I most definitely have plans to attract new attendees from cities outside of the Tyler area.

The biggest key to our success will be high quality, true to type, disease free, blooming sized bulbs, that can't be commonly purchased from other sources. "If we provide it, they will come." Because of my background as a horticulturist and educator, I have to know every detail of the bulbs that we will be selling, promoting, and marketing. Like it or not, we are

competing with high quality Dutch grown bulbs. This has both its ups and downs. The good news is most Dutch bulbs aren't adapted to the South. The bad news is they are large, colorfully marketed bulbs that everyone knows. My job will be to explain why our bulbs are better for Texas and Southern gardeners.

Because gardeners trust me and what I tell them, I need to know every grower that provides our bulbs and I need to be familiar with their stock and where it came from. Luckily in addition to my own stock, I have several former students now producing Southern heirloom bulbs that we can purchase from. I've heard several comments from folks about how our profits will go down if we rely on purchased bulbs instead of member grown bulbs, but the key is quality and marketing. Just imagine if Proctor and Gamble decided they'd make more money by having their employees make soap at home because it was cheaper. To mass market and make maximum profits on a product, it has to be consistent; with all of its qualities well known, documented, and advertised. This is why we will forgo member grown bulbs for now until I figure out who has what, make sure it's accurately identified, and coach the members who want to be bulb farmers on industry standards, proper harvest time, and proper storage. It's extremely important that customers get exactly what we tell them they are getting and that it does exactly what I tell them it's going to do.



Project Status— The Home Garden Tour, AgriWorld, the Calendar and Gardening Guide and the Bulb Sale projects are all successfully underway. The theme of this year's calendar will be "25 Years of Master Gardening", and the new title for the bulb sale is "From Bulbs to Blooms".

Bylaws — The Bylaws subcommittee met and began discussing needed changes to the current bylaws. Changes will include added language to satisfy TXMGA requirements for filing 990s as well as language to address indemnification of officers and insurance requirements. Additionally, the subcommittee will revise the current bylaws to reflect process changes that have occurred over the last few years.

Scholarship Policy — The Scholarship subcommittee will begin the process of developing a more robust process to award scholarships. A new policy and procedure will be written and a separate Scholarship Fund will be added to the Budget to capture any designated funds acquired by SCMG for this purpose.

Budget Modification — The Committee approved \$700 to fund a new budget category, "Youth Gardens". Sub-accounts for this category will be Jr. Master Gardeners and Learn, Grow, Eat, Go. The \$700 will help fund a youth garden project at Target Academy which is utilizing the Learn, Grow, Eat, Go curriculum.

MAY GARDENING

by Sam Griffith



The old poem says: "April showers bring May flowers."

By the same token, your labors in April will produce your garden's bounty in May, and in June and through July, and if the seasons work well, and maybe until frost.

It has been an unusual six months - we had a mild winter with little rain. Usually, our spring is very wet, this is normally our "rainy" season. But we have had sparse rain. Nonetheless, we must soldier on, contending with whatever the weather gives us.

A few gardening hints you may use to enhance your gardening results:

1. Cutworms: Have you ever planted a soft stemmed plant, like a tomato, and returned the next morning, and see it cut off right at the ground, the top of the tomato plant laying lifeless on the soil. A cutworm, a thin, evil green worm, curls around the stem of the plant just below the surface and gnaws through the stem. To defeat cutworms, simply cut open a common plastic drinking straw lengthwise. Then snip the plastic straw into two or three inch lengths. Gently open the short straw and place the straw around the stem of the plant. The straw will snap shut, enclosing the stem. Plant the plant, making sure the bottom of the drinking straw is about situated a half inch below the surface. As the plant grows, it will push open the cut straw and continue to grow and flourish. Cutworms thwarted.

2. Planting carrots: Homegrown carrots fresh from your own garden are delicious! One problem with planting carrots, though, is that carrots are very sloooooowww to germinate, and when they finally germinate, they look just like tender, feathery new weeds. For years, I seemed to pull too many "weeds", only to later realize I had cleaned out my carrots. So how do you grow carrots without risking accidentally pulling them up as "weeds"? Build up a slight ridge, just a few inches tall, along your row (so the carrots will have a nice bed of soft soil in which to grow). Then simply make a little furrow, of maybe a quarter to half inch deep, the length of your raised bed. Then scatter the carrot seeds in the furrow. And here is the trick: Now scatter a few radish seeds among the carrot seeds. Slightly cover the seeds with a fine dusting of soil and dampen the soil. The radish seeds will germinate in a few days, and have those easily-identifiable radish leaves. And by the time you begin to harvest the radishes, the tiny, fern-like carrot leaves will have sprung up along the row of radish seeds. The radishes mark the carrot rows. So you get your radishes, and then you get to gobble your delicious carrots.

3. Keep everything well-watered. The last couple years, I've gotten casual - it's March/April/May, and I think: "Didn't we just get a shower?" - and then you realize it's been a couple weeks since your garden had a decent rain. Back in 1999 through 2006, when I grew six to seven acres of vegetables for local soup kitchens and food banks, the size of the fields precluded me from watering the fields. When people asked how I kept everything watered, I would quote the Apostle Paul, who wrote, in First Corinthians 3: 6 that "I have planted, Apollos watered; but GOD gave the increase." Then I would explain that on my farm, GOD graciously fulfilled two roles: GOD both provided the water, and then GOD gave the increase, the crops. And GOD fulfilled both roles magnificently, for the garden, at its peak, provided over 11,000 ears of freshly picked ears of Merit sweet corn a year!

But in the last few years, rain in east Texas has gotten more erratic. So don't depend on Mother Nature dependably watering your plants. Do it yourself. And mulch the garden to even out the moisture in the soil.

So enjoy your garden. Until next month.

Award Winners at the April 6th Luncheon

First Tuesday in the Garden

The noontime lectures in the IDEA Garden will resume this fall with the following schedule:

Sept. 5 - "Fall Vegetable Gardening" with Greg Grant

Oct 3 - "From Bulbs to Blooms" a preview of the October 14 sale event

Nov. 7 - "All About Trees" with Henry Burch

MG of the Year—Clayton Turner

Intern of the Year—Denise Rasco (also w/most Intern hours)

MG w/most Hours—Susan Stone

Lifetime Award—Joanie Matthews

President's Award—Pat Welch

Media Award—Martin Davis

Public Awareness—Jean Smith & Andie Rathbone

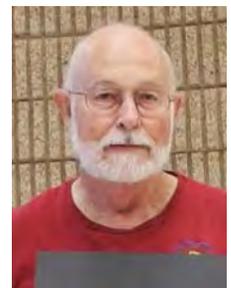
"No Problem" Award—Monette & Charlie Colman

Golden Work Glove—Wayne Elliott

Helping Hand Award—Chris Steavenson

Friend of SCMG—Dr. Jim Stanford

For pictures of all the winners go to <http://txmg.org/smith/about/awards-recognition-3/>



Clayton Turner

Texas State Awards

The Texas Search for Excellence Awards Program is sponsored by the Texas Master Gardener Association (TMGA) with guidance provided by the Texas Master Gardener Coordinator from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

This year, the Annual Awards Luncheon will take place at 12:30pm, Monday, May 1st in Galveston in the elegant Frances Anne Moody Ballroom in the Moody Gardens Hotel. Tickets are \$45 per guest.

Master Gardeners at the Library

These programs are held on Fridays at 11:30 AM in the Tyler Library’s Taylor Auditorium. The next lecture will be:

May 5, “Heat Loving Plants” with Andie Rathbone

This series is innovative and informational. Each lecture is worth 1 CE. Please plan to join us on Friday for “Master Gardeners at the Library”.

JMG SPECIALIST TRAINING

There will be a JMG Specialist Training August 1-4 in Denton County. Please see the website below for registration and hotel information.

<http://dcmga.com/events/2017-junior-master-gardener-specialist-training/>.

Smith County MG Home Garden Tour

Saturday, June 3

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Tickets \$10 in advance \$15 day of tour

A complete list of the homes on the tour is on the SCMG website at <http://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>

International MG Conference July 10 – 14, 2017 – Portland Oregon

Note that the LAST DAY to register is May 26, 2017.

2017 East Texas Garden Lecture Series

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service invites you to their 2017 Garden Lecture Series. Registration will begin at 9 AM.

Ticket Information: Single tickets on sale the day of the lecture are \$15 per person.

Schedule of lectures: (all at the Tyler Rose Garden Center, unless otherwise noted)

Sep 9 – Pella-legna Vineyard/Winery “In Vino Vertias” at Pella-legna Vineyard

Nov 11 – Dawn Stover, SFA Gardens “Designed Plant Communities-Planting for Pollinators in a Pest Wild World”



Who is this?

Pictured below are a few who received awards at the April 6th luncheon. See the entire list of the winners on page 3 of this newsletter.



From left, Susan Stone—Most MG hours,, Greg Grant—Ext. Agent, Clayton Turner—MG of the year, Denise Rasco—Intern of the year w/most hours.



**Joanie Matthews
Lifetime Member**

Photos by Martin Davis