



ECHO

Extension's Community Horticultural Outreach

March – April 2005

Hello My Friends,

Spring has sprung and the Collin County Extension Horticulture program is running. You Master Gardeners have come through in a big way this spring by being more involved than ever with helping on the telephone answerline, giving talks, working at information booths and on various committees and projects. Because we have had available Master Gardeners (and wonderful organizational skills by Rene Mahoney), the number of telephone calls to our office and the number of talks given by Master Gardeners have both significantly increased from previous years. Keep up the great work. We have unlimited potential.

Along the lines of housekeeping issues, please keep in mind that it is very important for you to honor the commitments you make as a Master Gardener. When MGs sign up and then do not show up, it really puts a strain on fellow MGs and often makes our program look bad. Unexpected circumstances are a part of life and sometimes we do have to adjust schedules. When this happens, please let project/committee chairpersons know and then try to find a backup for yourself.

The turf questions are starting to pour in, and I wanted to remind you of a great source of Texas turf information. On the Aggie Horticulture website (located at <http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu>), there is a link for "Aggie Turf." This link takes you directly to all kinds of detailed, research based information on Texas turfgrass establishment and care. One great section of the Aggie Turf website is a monthly overview of turf maintenance suggestions called "Turf Tips." This is great for a general overview every month, and you can go directly to these articles by visiting <http://aggie-turf.tamu.edu>.

Master Gardeners, be just that!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Landry Lockett".

Landry Lockett, CEA-Horticulture, Texas Cooperative Extension



Educational programs of Texas Cooperative Extension are open to all individuals without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.

PLANT IN THE SPOTLIGHT:**Bamboo Muhly (*Muhlenbergia dumosa*)****By Candace Fountoulakis**

Love the look of bamboo, but don't want to introduce an invasive exotic to your landscape? Consider bamboo muhly instead! This airy, see-through bunch grass has the jointed-stem appearance of bamboo without the attendant control problems that many varieties of bamboo exhibit. *Muhlenbergia dumosa* is a beautiful light green in spring when the narrow lance-shaped leaves emerge on the branches spaced well apart on the stems. Its tendency to bow down makes it a versatile player in the garden, lending a soft, feathery touch to perennials and hard-scape alike. A bit tender in our zone 7 and 8 gardens, give this southern Arizona native a hot spot protected from the coldest winds and enjoy its unusual color and shape mixed with darker companions. Bamboo muhly never completely "greens up", instead staying a warm straw color with green leaves on the unique stems. In winter, all of the plant goes tan, but don't be in a hurry to trim it back. The airy nature looks good in the garden at any season. If you prefer a more tidy, compact shape, you can prune it back, but left alone it looks just great. Stems become woody so clip those off at the base of the plant once the leaves on live stems arrive in spring. This grass does not require supplemental watering once it is established in the garden and looks its best when situated in front of a contrasting dark plant or draping casually near waters' edge. Bamboo muhly plays well off of rocks, statuary, brick walls or shrubbery in the landscape and brings a sense of motion and liveliness to a garden scene. The seed heads form early in spring and are quite small, located right at the end of the blades and just add another dimension to the frilly, lightweight impression made by this plant. Not a showstopper in the garden, this muhly can best be enjoyed as a fine-textured finishing touch.



Photo courtesy of Madrone Nursery, San Marcos, Texas

A Review of the Speakers Bureau Workshop—March 10**By Dorothy Ingram**

The fear and trembling felt by the eleven CCMG interns at the beginning of the recent workshop held at the Research Center was vanquished by a proven CCMG faculty.

A big hand was given to Bob Marquardt (on loan by pro, Pat Marquardt) for his much needed equipment tips and suggestions for humorous (or not) visual aids. (And no, we cannot again use shots of Landry's backyard.) Mary Nell Jackson advised us on how to answer politely ALL questions without reverting to hand-to-hand combat as in "chocolate is a herb?"

Nancy Furth's gentle persuasion would convince anyone they could grow almost anything by following the Extension rules of conduct. Allow your credibility to show!

(Continued on page 9)

Fundraising Update**By Candace Fountoulakis****Texas Superstars and Earthkind Roses Plant Sale Information**

Master Gardeners, start your engines... the 2005 TEXAS SUPERSTARS AND EARTHKIND ROSES PLANT SALE is getting closer...Saturday April 2, 11:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. to be held in the Pavilion building at 17360 Coit Road at Texas A&M Research and Extension Center. If you have not already signed up to volunteer for Friday set up and/or Saturday's sale, you still can and you are needed. Email Candace Fountoulakis at fjohn94@aol.com. We received some great publicity in the March issue of the Plano Profile magazine, if you don't receive the magazine, the article is available at www.planoprofile.com/upfront.html. Thanks to Paula Brehm for arranging the details of that wonderful opportunity for the CCMGA.

Fundraising: Cookbooks are now available for sale and distribution through Sheila Nelson at the County Extension office in McKinney. Check out cookbooks from Sheila, then return proceeds and any unsold books to her. If you plan to participate in a Master Gardener event, check out some books to sell and see how popular they are becoming! Only \$13.00 each.

Information Booths Update**By Renee Ferguson**

The group has been busy in March with booths at Dallas Home & Garden Show and at Shades of Green's open house. In April, we will have more events needing volunteers. There will be a table set up at our own plant sale on April 2. In addition, there will be two events on the same day that will need many volunteers. **Smartscape** and **It's A Natural** will both be held on April 23. These are well attended events that we have traditionally been invited to.

It's A Natural

Scherle Barth will take the leadership role for It's A Natural, that will be held at Arbor Hills Nature Preserve in Plano from 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M., April 23. This is a large event that was well attended last year and we had wonderful weather that day. The event is held under a large tent that will provide shelter in case of rain. We will be selling our cookbooks, as well as giving out publications.

2004 Texas Smartscape Lawn and Garden Showcase

I'm still looking for someone to be the lead for the Smartscape event. Smartscape will be held at the Environmental Discovery Garden on 4120 W. Plano Parkway from 10:00 A.M- 2:00 P.M. April 23. It will also be under a tent in case of light rainfall. We will also sell cookbooks at this event.

To volunteer, contact Renee Ferguson at rennybird@comcast.net.

North Collin County Habitat for Humanity**By Carol Dean**

Here's the scoop for North Collin County Habitat for Humanity. We will be giving a presentation to the NCCHF Homeowners Association on Saturday, April 2 in the evening. The time will be decided later. Anyone interested in being there is welcome. I think the presentation will be in McKinney at the NCCHF office, but I'm not positive and I may have 2 people to help with it. The topic of discussion will most likely be basic lawn care. If you are interested in attending or volunteering, contact Carol Dean at carcdean@comcast.net.

Jail Program

By Rhonda Mieure

I had a chat with Landry Lockett last week about the work he is doing at the Collin County Minimum Security Jail in McKinney. For two years Landry has been spending at least an hour every week teaching inmates the fundamentals of horticulture. He finds it very rewarding to present them with a creative outlet that can be used as a future job skill. Landry also likes presenting a positive image to the attendees because many of them view most jobs as mundane and boring. As we all know, the field of horticulture is anything but mundane and boring to those of us who enjoy it. For the many class members who are interested in horticulture, these classes can represent hope for their future. The inmates are particularly fond of Landry's program because it is so positive and is less intense than many of the other programs they are required to attend.

All of the inmates at this facility are non-violent felons and must serve a minimum six month sentence; some are assigned to the correctional facility for as long as two years. The corrections program that requested assistance from the Collin County Extension Office is called S.C.O.R.E. which is an acronym for, "Sheriff's Convicted Offender Re-entry Effort". S.C.O.R.E. is a two part program which is designed to assist and support inmates as they transition back into society. The first part of the program includes counseling, community service, drug, alcohol and parenting classes and general education classes. Landry's class is one of the general education classes. The second part of the S.C.O.R.E. program is a work-release program designed to put the offender back into the community on a trial basis.

Landry's class began because an extension employee, Carrie Brazeal, was teaching parenting classes at the corrections facility. Carrie works in the County Extension Department of Family and Consumer Sciences. The S.C.O.R.E. Program Director liked Carrie's work and contacted Landry to find out what the Extension Center could offer in the way of horticultural training classes. Her hope was that taking the classes would enable the offenders to learn a basic career skill. Landry suggested horticulture fundamentals and he's been teaching just that ever since. The basic skills that attendees pick up in these classes open opportunities they may never have had before. Their new skills will make them valuable employees at garden centers, nurseries and landscaping companies. In fact, they can expand these skills by learning basic business skills and even open their own yard maintenance businesses.

Landry's classes have been so successful that several months ago the S.C.O.R.E. Program Director asked Landry to consider expanding the class to include a wider scope of horticultural knowledge. Expanding the subjects taught would require a formalized curriculum which is something Landry has always wanted to develop. Landry has asked the Master Gardeners to assist him in writing and presenting the new formalized program.

The new program is in development now, with several of us developing the curriculum and will probably be a twelve to fifteen week course covering topics such as; Plant Basics, Propagation, Turf, Soil, Environmental Horticulture, Vegetable, Fruit and Nut Production, Landscaping with Functional and Ornamental Plants and Plant Problems. Of course, there are several sub-topics under each of these and some topic areas may take two to four class sessions to complete. As the program documentation is completed, there may be a need to have some practice presentations to determine how much can be taught in a one hour class.

While having a formalized program will be nice, any opportunity to serve our community by working with non-violent inmates would likely be as rewarding to the presenter as it is for the inmates. The class environment is well controlled; the inmates are interested in the classes and are not aggressive. There is no reason to fear presenting at this facility. Training at this facility would be a very good avenue for new presenters to hone their presentation skills. None of the attendees will have much horticultural experience so the questions asked of the presenter will tend to be very basic. In addition, there are no experts in the audience to intimidate a new presenter.

Landry is seeking volunteers to teach the current curriculum as well as the curriculum currently in development. If you are interested in presenting or assisting presenters at the Corrections Facility, please contact Rene Mahoney by telephone at (972) 838-4210 or by email at rmaho1055@aol.com.

Medicinal Uses for Plants

Trivia compiled by author Mark B. Charlton
Submitted by Katherine Ponder

****Note of common sense: This is just a “hmm ... I didn’t know that article,” not a how-to article. Do not administer a drug, plant-based or otherwise, without consulting a doctor.****

Ajuga – The sap of the ajuga contains tannin, which helps stop bleeding. So if you ever happen to cut yourself shaving while in your garden, this all-natural styptic pencil may come in handy.

Althea, or hollyhock – Althaea is Greek for “that which heals.” The althea plant has been used as an insect repellent and as a soothing treatment for insect bites. It was once a common ingredient in cough syrups and was also thought to work wonders for sore throats, upset stomachs, and some infections.

Alyssum, or basket of gold – Alyssum was used to treat mental illness. Indeed, its name is from the Greek meaning “without madness.” The superstitious believed that a posy of this flower would keep people from becoming angry at you.

Columbine – Once one of the most important of the medicinal plants, columbine was used to treat many things including measles and smallpox.

Dahlia – Dahlia roots have an extremely high sugar content. Before the discovery of insulin, they were used to treat diabetics.

Echinacea, or coneflower – Long used for medicinal purposes, scientists have now isolated chemicals within the coneflower that are effective in treating certain viral infections. Also touted today as an immune-system builder.

Gentian – Used since ancient times to kill intestinal worms and treat other digestive disorders, gentian is still used today externally on insect stings.

Hyacinth – Ancient Greeks used hyacinths to treat dysentery and poisonous spider bites. Potions made from the plant were also said to prevent the change of voice that occurs when boys reach puberty.

Iberis, or candytuft – A popular plant among herbalists, iberis was once widely used as a treatment for rheumatism.

Impatiens – The sap of one common variety of impatiens has been proven effective in the treatment of poison ivy. It was traditionally used as a salve for skin conditions by several Native American tribes.

Iris – The iris was one of the flowers most widely cultivated and used for an astounding variety of medicinal purposes. Fevers, chills, coughs, colds, epilepsy, headaches, and snakebites are just some of the conditions that were treated with concoctions made from the iris flower and roots.

Marigold – The leaves of the marigold were used to treat wounds and to get rid of warts.

Pansy – Pansy leaves were typically used to brew love potions, but Nicholas Culpepper, the famous 17th-century herbalist and writer, believed they were more useful in combating venereal disease.

Spiderwort – Spiderwort is currently of great interest to scientists because of its extreme sensitivity to pollution and radiation. When exposed to these toxins, even at low levels, the stamens of the spiderwort undergo changes in color that are quite reliable indicators.

Verbena – Verbena was used to treat rabies, asthma, rheumatism, and epilepsy. It was also considered an aphrodisiac.

Animals in the Garden

By Rhonda Mieux

I read an article the other day that said you should never dig in your garden if your dog is watching because it will teach him to dig. I've been involved in dog rescue for many years and I've met hundreds of dogs and their people. I have not met one dog who wasn't able to list digging as a primary skill, learned in early adolescence under strict instruction of his peers. Sometimes dogs learn digging in early adolescence due to an absence of peers. I think the primary reason dogs learn to dig is that they are able to locate dirt. My point is, all of the dogs I've ever known dug because that is what dogs do. I do know people who have trained their dogs to dig in specific, discreet parts of the yard and I am, in fact, in the process of teaching that to a dog who recently took up residence in our home. Her name is Margaret (Maggie) Mugwump and she does fairly well until the cat buries something Maggie just has to exhume. So, I'm working on the cat now. I'm sure my neighbor hears the conversations I have with my animals and wants to call the people with the white jackets. Last year this neighbor worried about my conversations with my roses. I fear this year is going to be very difficult for my poor neighbor.

I've always had a menagerie of pets but they've all been of the princess variety – digging spoils their nails and hair. Maggie is anything but a princess. She appears to be a bulldog-sharpeii mix and she is extremely active and extremely tough. I could describe the havoc she has wreaked in our yard in the three short months since she moved in, but I really don't want to relive it. We chose to laugh over the very thorny rose bush that magically moved from the south side of the yard to the east side. We're also laughing at the track she is wearing in my husband's finely cultivated back lawn. We laughed when we found her hiding hole in a fenced bed behind expensive and well loved specimen shrubs. We can laugh at those things because we haven't trained her not to do them yet and she means more to us than the landscaping. Our laughing stopped one day when she walked onto the deck with a four foot philodendron leaf in her mouth. Yes, I love the philodendron but I love the dog more and philodendrons are toxic. Suddenly her mischief wasn't very funny anymore. She must have been very stealthy in acquiring that leaf because we really thought there was no way she could get to it. We also never, ever leave our dogs in the yard unsupervised. We have two Shih Tzu's and one Lhasa Apso and these breeds are frequently stolen out of back yards. If Maggie were stolen, the thief would bring her back in minutes, so that is not our concern with her. Maggie just can't be trusted out there unsupervised. I have no idea

how she got that leaf while we were out there with her but then, that is the point of this article.

We were very fortunate for several reasons; Maggie brought the leaf right to us, she was very proud. She hadn't chewed on it at all. It was during a business day and my vet was in. The treatment was simple; we had to make her drink milk to prevent the leaf from burning her mouth. I shudder to think what she would have gone through if we had not been outside with her and she had chewed up the entire leaf. I've always believed that leaving a dog unattended in a backyard has to be done very carefully. If the yard has a garden even more care has to be taken. This plant was on a two foot pedestal next to a building and surrounded with a five foot fence. I have no idea how this thirty five pound dog got to it. The leaves were well out of her reach. We were very blessed in the way this all happened, it could have been so much worse.

Prior to this incident and even prior to Maggie's arrival in our home, I was researching poisonous garden plants for an ECHO article. I was astounded at how much trouble a dog can get into in a yard if he is left unattended. It's not just the damage to the landscaping, although there is considerable expense involved with that. Dogs can and do get badly injured in the weirdest of circumstances. A dog left in the back yard, even with a playmate and toys can get very bored and it's this boredom that leads him into mischief and mayhem. If you have chain link fences or short wood fences he can get his collar caught and cause himself serious injury and even death struggling to detach himself. If you have aluminum or steel edging, wood edging and even plastic edging you have objects that a dog can get hurt on. He can get cut on the aluminum and steel. He can get splinters in his mouth and digestive system chewing on wooden edging and he can ingest large pieces of plastic edging just doing what dogs do – chewing.

In addition to these dangers there are the chemicals that we must be so careful with. If we have children, we're probably already trained to keep the chemicals out of the children's reach but sometimes dogs can exercise feats of dexterity that children wouldn't attempt. I had moved all of my fertilizers and rose sprays outside to a very high shelf on my deck until I realized this little three foot dog of ours could jump six feet in the air and knock a bottle off of the shelf. Now the chemicals, what few I use, are locked in our garden shed. We have to lock it because Maggie can stick her paw between the doors and open them.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

I realize that Maggie is probably a little more troublesome than many other dogs. She is just very curious about the world around her and she gets bored faster than any two year old I've ever known. I have activity toys for her and when I have to leave the house I fill them up with her breakfast and sequester her in the house or in a very large yard pen that we've built in a nice shady, grassy spot on the side of the house. I go out before I leave and bury her treats and toys in the yard under her pen. This gives her a place to dig to her heart's content. We used quite a bit of concrete to reinforce the bottom of the pen so she can't dig out and we never leave her out there if we're going to be gone more than an hour or two. We take her collar off but she is micro-chipped just in case she finds a way out. I also have a neighbor who is a stay at home mom and she's always out in back with her kids so she keeps an ear open for me. Otherwise, Maggie is sequestered in the house for her safety. She sees her crate as her den and often sleeps in it when we're home. All of our dogs love their crates; dogs are den animals and can be uncomfortable in a whole house or yard with no leadership or direction. They seem to instinctively know they are safe in them when we're not home. Of course, they resist going in them at first but they're resisting the fact that we are leaving, not the fact that they have to go in the crate. It is important however, that we not leave the dog in the crate for long periods of time. Not only will you break his heart and lose his trust, you will cause him physical pain from holding his water and not being able to walk around and stretch. We always walk Maggie for at least an hour before we put her in a crate. A well exercised dog is a tired and content dog.

I've met many dogs who had the same craving for activity that Maggie has and I've even known owners who surrendered their dogs to rescue because they couldn't manage the dog and the landscaping. I find that very sad because there are so many things you can do to have the landscaping and the dog. It is work at first, nothing worthwhile comes without effort and I understand that. On the other hand, at the end of beautiful spring day in the garden the ambience is like a fairy tale. My husband is grilling on the deck and I'm on the swing with one or two or four fur kids on my lap. They're tired and we're tired but we're all relaxed. They nuzzle my neck and they smell like sweet garden dirt. There's nothing like it. Nobody you ever meet will love you as much as your dog does. He loves you more than he loves himself and if it were necessary he'd give his life for you. If you have a dog, give him his own "garden", a place in the yard where he is allowed to "plant" his things. Train your dog how he is expected to behave, inside and out. A dog is fully capable of learning to respect your things

whether they are plants or shoes. There are many professionals who can help you learn how to train your dog to behave. I know several and I'm sure your vet can recommend a few. There is no end to the pleasure you will get out of living with a well trained dog or two, there's nothing else like it.

Listed below are websites and phone numbers that you may want to use when purchasing landscaping and house plants that are safe for your pets. I've also listed numbers for Animal Poison Control and Emergency Animal Clinic of Collin County. If you search the internet you will also find tremendous information about dog training and behavior at the breed club and rescue websites. I realize this article has focused mostly on dogs. Cats in the garden is a full article in itself. One I may pursue at a later date. Just know that what is poison to the dog is certainly poison to the cat and cats tend to eat plant material much more often than dogs. Cats also can perform the wonderful service of keeping the garden vermin free if you have an outside cat. My cats are rescues and will not tolerate being confined to the house but they do perform their jobs quite well. We are careful not to leave vermin poisons around that would endanger either the cat or the dogs.

I hope those of us who are blessed with the company of dogs will find joy in accommodating their more unusual habits. Having their company and watching their antics make all of the work just incidental.

Here are the numbers I suggest you pin on your family bulletin board:

Emergency Animal Clinic of Collin County

Open nights, weekends and holidays.
(972) 517-7155

Texas A&M's Catalog of toxic plants:

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/publications/poison/poisonlinks.html>

ASPCA National Animal Poison Control

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is the premier animal-oriented poison control center in North America. So it's the best resource for any animal poison-related emergency, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Make the call that can make all the difference: (888) 426-4435. There is all manner of animal information at the ASPCA website: <http://www.aspc.org/site/PageServer>. There is an option to select the ASPCA Poison Control Center webpage on the home page listed above

Garden Checklist for March, 2005

by Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist, Texas Cooperative Extension

- Prepare beds for planting warm-season flowers and vegetables.
- For every 100 square feet of bed area, work in a 2- to 3-inch layer of organic material such as compost, pine bark, or sphagnum peat moss.
- Select and order caladium tubers as well as geranium and coleus plants for late April and early May planting. Do not plant caladiums until soil temperature reaches 70 degrees F.
- As camellia and azalea plants finish blooming, fertilize them with 3 pounds of azalea-camellia fertilizer per 100 square feet of bed area.
- Check mulch on azalea and camellia plantings and add where needed. Consider using pine needles, pine bark, or similar organic materials.
- Beware of closeout sales on bare-root trees and shrubs. The chance of survival is rather low on bare-root plants this late in the season. Best bets for now are container-grown or balled-and-burlapped plants.
- Remember that many trees and shrubs are damaged or killed each year by the careless application of weed killers, including those found in mixes of fertilizers and weed killers. Always read and follow label directions very carefully. Weeds in a lawn usually indicate a poor lawn-management program and can usually be crowded out in a healthy turf.
- Start hanging baskets of petunias and other annuals for another dimension in landscape color.
- Freeze-damaged beds of Asiatic jasmine ground cover should be sheared back just as new growth starts to encourage new growth from the base.
- For early color in the landscape, try some of the following annuals as transplants: ageratums, cockscombs, fibrous rooted begonias, coreopsis, cosmos, cleomes, marigolds, nasturtiums, petunias, phlox, portulacas, salvias, sweet alyssums, sunflowers, and zinnias.
- Divide existing clumps of fall-blooming perennials, such as chrysanthemums, autumn asters, Mexican marigold mint, and physostegia (obedient plant). Separate the clumps into individual plants and set them 8-10" apart in groupings of 5 or more. Be sure to prepare the bed area well by spading in 3-5" of organic material into the top 8-10" of soil. For long lasting fertility add 3-5 pounds of cottonseed meal or slow release fertilizer per 100#s of bed area.

This article appeared in the March 2005 on-line issue of Horticulture Update, edited by Dr. Douglas F. Welsh, and produced by Extension Horticulture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System, College Station, Texas.

Garden Checklist for April

by Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist, Texas Cooperative Extension

- Prune spring-flowering shrubs soon after flowering. Keep the natural shape of the plant in mind as you prune, and avoid excessive cutting except where necessary to control size.
- Roses have high fertilizer requirements. For most soils, use a complete fertilizer for the first application just as new growth starts, then use ammonium sulfate, or other high nitrogen source, every 4 to 6 weeks, usually just as the new growth cycle starts following a flowering cycle.
- Continue to spray rose varieties susceptible to black spot, using an appropriate fungicidal spray such as Funginex. Use every 7 to 10 days, or as recommended.
- Climbing hybrid tea roses may be pruned as soon as they complete flowering.
- Removing spent flowers, trimming back excessive growth, and applying fertilizer to an established bed can do wonders towards rejuvenating and extending the life of the planting.
- As soon as azaleas have finished flowering, apply an acid type fertilizer at the rate recommended. Don't over fertilize, as azalea roots are near the surface and damage can occur. Water thoroughly after fertilizing.
- Seeds of amaranthus, celosia, cosmos, marigold, portulaca, zinnia, and other warm-season annuals can be sown directly in the beds where they are to grow. Keep seeded areas moist until seeds germinate. Thin out as soon as they are large enough to transplant. Surplus plants can be transplanted to other areas.

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 2)

Our final faculty member, Diane Poston, worked up a Speakers Survival Kit supply list that most likely would be the first item opened before a presentation. Most often used item? Of course, the extension cord! And did you know that the paper clip in the kit will pop open the compact disk without having to re-boot? We didn't. Thanks to Pat and Bob, there also will be a step-by-step plug-in instruction sheet with visual aids.

Renee Mahoney put on a great show—with cookies, candy, cake and CCMG'S. We also learned the Anatomy of a Presentation from Diane Sharp: Tell them what you are going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them you told them.

Thanks to all.

Out and About ...

Activities and Events of Interest

(The activities and events listed below are not eligible for continuing education or CCMGA Volunteer hours.)

The Heard Natural Science Museum and Wildlife Sanctuary: Native Plant Sale will be April 15—17. More information can be found on their web site: www.heardmuseum.org.

A list of plants that will be available for sale is available on the web site for a little pre-sale preparation!

Dallas Arboretum: Education opportunities abound at the Arboretum. Check out their Education page for more information: www.dallasarboretum.org

Texas Discovery Gardens at Fair Park:

DestiNature: Flying Wild 10 am - 2 pm Saturday, April 9 Bring your whole family to meet live hawks, owls and falcons from the [Blackland Prairie Raptor Center](#). Try your hand at building a nest, flying through bird hurdles, creating a bird buffet and eating like a bird. Plus, learn how to eloquently talk turkey! Geared for all ages. *Texas Discovery Gardens members admitted free.*

Naturally Delicious Earth Day Celebration.

10 am - 2 pm Saturday, April 16
Sponsored by Central Market, this special event will include cooking demonstrations, tasty samples and exhibit booths featuring displays and information on growing organic fruits, vegetables and herbs. Geared for all ages. *Texas Discovery Gardens members admitted free.*

Continuing Education Opportunities:

- **Master Gardener Specialist Entomology Training** is being held July 11—15. Find out more information on this training by visiting: <http://insects.tamu.edu/mgtrain/index.html>
- **April 16 or April 17 The Benz School of Floral Design** at Texas A&M University is offering a series of workshops exclusively for Texas Master Gardeners. Come join the fun with instructor David Simpson in the state-of-the-art floral design lab located in the Horticultural and Forest Sciences Building on beautiful West Campus in College Station. Join in the fun of a one day, 6 hour workshop with other Master Gardeners from around the state. Lunch, a Benz School gift, and floral designs to take home are included with registration fees. All projects are oriented with the gardener in mind CEU credits available – check with your local coordinator Register now for the April Showers Workshops! For more information and registration go to <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/benz/index.html>

Volunteer Opportunities:

McKinney Volunteer Appreciation Day—1 Volunteer needed Saturday, April 16 from 8 am to 12 pm. The volunteers will help (guide) teenagers with potting plants. Contact Renee Mahoney at rmaho1055@aol.com immediately if you are interested, the group is waiting for confirmation of volunteer availability.

(Continued on page 10)

Speakers Bureau April Schedule

The Speakers Bureau is in need of one or two assistants to help at each of the talks that are scheduled for April. If you are interested, contact Rene Mahoney at rmaho1055@aol.com

APRIL			
2-Apr	"Ornamental and Small Trees for Collin County"	Parker Garden Club Parker, TX	9:00AM
Speaker	Larry Everett		
2-Apr	"Smartscape Perennials"	Collin Creen Community Church Tyler, TX	
Speaker	Debbie Finley		
6-Apr	"ABC's of Flower Gardening in Collin County"	Mom's Club of North Plano, TX	9:45AM
Speaker	Nancy Furth		
Assistant	Adele Bourget		
7-Apr	"Container Gardening"	Allen Garden Club Allen, TX	7:00PM
Speaker	Nancy Furth		
Assistant	Debbie Tschetter		
11-Apr	"Shade Trees for Collin County"	McKinney Senior Cen- McKinney, TX	10:30AM
Speaker	Nancy Furth		
Assistant	Adele Bourget, Pat Paischyk		
17-Apr	"Good Bugs, Bad Bugs"	Heritage Herb Club Plano, TX	2:30PM
Speaker	Diane Poston		
18-Apr	"Shade Gardening"	Plano Senior Center Plano, TX	10AM
Speaker	Pat Marquardt		
Assistant	Lynnette Terrell		
19-Apr	"Wildflowers, Legends and More"	Frisco Garden Club Frisco, TX	10:00AM
Speaker	Judy Toole		
Assistant	Adele Bourget		
23-Apr	"Alternatives to Turf-Groundcovers"	City of Plano Plano, TX	12:30PM
Speaker	Ramiro Ortiz		

(Continued from page 8)

- It will soon be time for bagworms to attack junipers and other narrow-leaved evergreens. Light infestations may be controlled by hand picking and burning. Control measures such as Sevin dust or spray, should be applied while the insects and the bags are about one-half inch in length.
- For instant color, purchase started annual plants. Select short, compact plants. Any flowers or flower buds should be pinched to give plants an opportunity to become established.
- Check new tender growth for aphids. A few can be tolerated, but large numbers should be controlled. Always follow label instructions on approved pesticides for control.
- Many flower or vegetable seeds left over after planting the garden can be saved for the next season by closing the packets with tape or paper clips and storing in a sealed glass jar in your refrigerator.
- Start weeding early in the flower garden. Early competition with small plants can delay flowering. A mulch will discourage weed growth and make those that do come through easier to pull.
- Soil purchased for use in beds, low areas, and containers should be examined closely. Often, nut grass and other weeds, nematodes, and soil borne disease are brought into the yard through contaminated soil sources.
- Watch newspaper and other publicity for information regarding wildflower trails, and plan to take a trip to enjoy this beautiful natural resource.

This article appeared in the April 2004 on-line issue of Horticulture Update, edited by Dr. Douglas F. Welsh, and produced by Extension Horticulture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System, College Station, Texas.

April 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2Ornamental Trees Talk-9 am Smartscape Perennials, Tyler TX Texas Superstars and Earthkind Roses Plant Sale 11-4 NCCHH Home-owners Presentation
3	4	5	6 ABC's of Flower Gardening— 9:45am	7 Container Gardening— 7pm	8	9
10	11 Shade Trees for Collin County— 10:30 am	12	13	14	15	16 McKinney Volunteer Appreciation Day 9-2
17 Good Bugs, Bad Bugs— 2:30 pm	18 Shade Gardening— 10 am	19 Wildflowers, Legends and more—10 am	20	21	22	23 It's a Natural 9-2 Smartscape 10-2 Alternatives to ground cover 12:30 pm
24	25	26	27	28 CCMGA Meeting 11:30	29	30

This and That

- **The April 28th meeting will be a Panel discussion on Flowers, Herbs, Shrubs & Vegetables presented by Diane Poston, Edith Hiatt, Susan Owens & Phil Shannon. They will give their top ten tips and answer your questions. SRC bldg. Heard Museum 11:30AM-1:30PM. (1 hr. education credit)**
- **The 2005 Texas Master Gardeners Advanced Training Seminar *For the Love of Gardening—Lessons and Inspirations* will be held in Denton at the Doral Tesoro Hotel and Golf Club, May 5-8. Access to the schedule, reservation forms and tour information is available at the Denton Master Gardener web site www.dcmga.com**

**Thanks to ECHO
Newsletter contributors:**

Carol Dean
Sara Garretson
Renee Ferguson
Candace Fountoulakis
Dorothy Ingram
Landry Lockett

Renee Mahoney
Sharon Meines
Rhonda Mieure
Katherine Ponder

Janice Miller
janicemiller@sbcglobal.net

CCMGA
Texas Cooperative Extension Office
825 N. MacDonald Street
Suite 150
McKinney, TX

