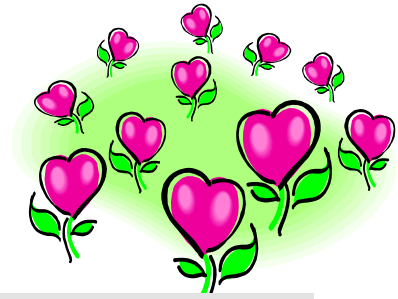




ECHO



Extension's Community Horticultural Outreach

Hello Friends,

JAN—FEB 2004

Within the past month, many of you have been helping with Landscape Schools and the Rose Symposium. Your help is greatly appreciated! Within about a month's time, Extension reaches at least a thousand folks with in-depth information about EarthKind™ landscape practices. Together we are making a difference in North Central Texas.



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.

I've just returned from a fact-finding mission to New Orleans, Louisiana. Dr. George and I both spoke to the New Orleans Old Garden Rose Society about our research findings with the EarthKind™ Roses. The trade-off was that we were able to interview many members about their experiences growing roses without the use of pesticides. We were also able to tour some garden sites where these roses were being grown. All of this is part of an effort to do our homework prior to the initiation of "Phase 2" of the EarthKind™ Rose research. Phase I of the research has yielded the 11 EarthKind™ roses, as well as continued research with the EarthKind Rose Brigade which will add to the EarthKind™ rose list. This research was conducted to find roses that would grow well in Texas that would almost never have to be sprayed with anything. Phase 2 of the research will continue with the same focus; however, the horizons have been broadened beyond Texas. This research will take years to complete, but the desired result will be a list of EarthKind™ roses that is applicable to the entire United States.

Telling you about this trip makes me think of the Texas Superstar and EarthKind™ Rose Plant Sale that is coming up on March 27th. With State cutbacks in funding, additional program fundraising is imperative for travel and program expenses. Money raised from this Plant Sale will help Dr. George and I build our horticulture funds to improve our Extension horticulture programs. The Collin County Master Gardeners Association will also make money from this plant sale to help offset yearly expenses and expand the CCMGA program. Your help will be needed before and during this event. More information from Candace Fountoulakis about how you can become involved is included in this newsletter.

Thanks so much,

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

Landry Lockett, CEA-Horticulture, Texas Cooperative Extension

Texas Superstar and EarthKind™ Rose Plant Sale March 27, 2004

Project Leader: Candace Fountoulakis (fjohn94@aol.com)

The Plant Sale Committee is busy finalizing the advertising publication for our plant sale scheduled for Saturday, March 27. During the second week of February, the project coordinators will meet to choose the best version of the sale flyer (being prepared by Erin Hoffer), anticipated shift hours, and other details.

Everyone's help will be needed for this very special event. Shifts of volunteer help will be required on Thursday, March 25 (our general meeting day) Friday, March 26, and all day Saturday.

On the morning of the sale there will be an informational seminar on Texas SuperStar™ Plants and EarthKind™ Roses, and Dr. Steve George will hold a Soil Symposium in the afternoon. As an incentive to those who attend these seminars attendees will be allowed to purchase plants before the sale opens to the general public. Copies of the flyer will be handed out at our general meeting in February to be placed strategically in and around our county to advertise the event. Please be thinking of good places to post them.

Thanks to all who have volunteered so far. More detailed information and instructions will be forthcoming as we near the weekend of the sale.

BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW SO THAT YOU WILL BE AVAILABLE TO HELP WITH THIS VERY SPECIAL EFFORT!

INFORMATION BOOTHS AND DISPLAYS

Renee Ferguson Project Leader

Springtime is information booth time!

On Saturday, March 6 from 8:30 a.m. until 3 p.m., we have been invited by Shades of Green to take part at the nursery's Open House. There will be other events in March including our big plant sale. Also, two big events in April will require staffing for the tables and kid activities.

There will be signup sheets at the February meeting for all upcoming events.

Contact Renee Ferguson at rennybird@comcast.net for more information.

The publications group has prepared the boxes with lots of informative material. These boxes are available for plant nursery booths as well as our regularly scheduled events.

We still have a need for an additional person to take on the displays at the district office.

***NOTE: Renee's Project and the JMG Project will gratefully accept all donations of your excess or unused craft supplies to be used in their forthcoming children's activities. Bring them to the February meeting or drop them off at the Office.**



Junior Master Gardeners

Project Leader: **Diane Poston** (cisco007@swbell.net)

The representation from Collin County at the JMG workshop in Dallas was terrific. The project committee is enthusiastically pursuing several opportunities in Collin County where the Junior Master Gardener Program can be implemented. They have met as a committee several times to formulate plans and are encouraged by the interest this program has generated. They were delighted to meet recently with a representative of the Girl Scout Council locally and look forward to working with them to implement the program. Please contact Diane about the next scheduled meeting of their committee.

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Project Leader: **Nancy Furth** (n.furth@verizon.net)

Springtime is always a busy time for garden-related activities including talks on the subject. Organizations and community members are keenly interested in hearing talks on the latest gardening topics and research. As Master Gardeners, we have a wonderful opportunity to reach a variety of audiences by volunteering on the Speakers Bureau. Our committee is dividing into teams so that the 'jitters' that come from speaking in public are lessened and our enjoyment and productivity are maximized.

The first meeting of the SB in January resulted in the group's combined effort to plan and organize several team-speaking and workshop projects to be presented to small groups in the area. Our efforts will continue with a focus on meeting the needs of the community and presenting timely, up-to-date, researched talks on horticultural topics of interest. Thank s to each of you who has stepped forward to help!

February's Schedule is listed below:

Topic	Speaker	Location	Date
Wildflowers	Judy Toole	Master Composters	Feb 5
Tomatoes from seed	group	McKinney Sen. Center	Feb 9
What a Dif. A Plant Makes	Diane Sharp	Wylie ISD	Feb 10
Spring garden plants	Nancy Furth	Heritage Farms GC	Feb 10
Yardwise Program	Nancy Furth	Plano Parks and Rec.	Feb 10
Container Gardening	group	Plano Senior Center	Feb 17
Yardwise Program	Nancy Furth	Plano Parks and Rec.	Feb 17
Wait! Don't Plant that Begonia!	group	Wylie ISD	Feb 24
What a Dif. A Plant Makes	group	Plant Parks and Rec.	Feb 25

Please contact Nancy if you are interested in participating on one of the group talks.

***We are currently creating new PowerPoint presentations and are in need of slides and/or pictures of EarthKind™ Roses and Texas Superstar Plants. We only need to borrow these to scan and will return them. Contact Nancy if you can help.**

TEXAS DISCOVER GARDEN CONNECTION

Sharon Meines

01/25- 05/31/04 "Save Water" Mural Exhibit

An exhibit of nine 8' X 4' inspiring, colorful murals created by children (ages 5-16 years old) are currently on display in Exhibit Hall at Texas Discovery Gardens. These murals were entries into a contest sponsored by the City of Dallas Water Utilities Department that support the department's ongoing water conservation campaign, "Save Water. Nothing Can Replace It."

These murals, created by children from nine Dallas community centers, depict a wide variety of ways to conserve water for a beautiful environment. The children were guided by artists from the Association of Latin Arts and Studies (ALAS).

Cost: Adults \$3, Seniors (60+) \$2, children (3-11) \$1.50. Members of Texas Discovery Gardens and children under 3 are admitted free.

For more information: Call 214-428-7476 or visit the website at www.texasdiscoverygardens.org

02/14/04 (1:00 pm) Love Bugs: A Steamy Afternoon of Romance

ADD A NEW TWIST TO YOUR LOVE LIFE! IN CELEBRATION OF VALENTINE'S DAY, BRING YOUR BELOVED TO HEAR A HUMOROUS PRESENTATION ON INSECTS AS APHRODISIACS, TAKE A GUIDED STROLL THROUGH THE WARM, LUSH TROPICAL CONSERVATORY AND INDULGE IN SWEET TREATS THAT WILL TICKLE YOUR TASTEBUDS. CALL TODAY TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION FOR THIS ROMANTIC RENDEZVOUS. FOR ADULTS ONLY! PAID ADVANCE REGISTRATION REQUIRED -- \$14 PER COUPLE. *Texas Discovery Gardens members -- \$10 per couple.*

02/21/04 (10:00 am) Tropical Escape

The cure for cabin fever and mid-winter blahs - bring your whole family to visit the tropical conservatory filled with fragrant flowers and exotic plants from around the world. This guided tour includes growing instructions. Melissa Martin, tropical plant specialist, will share expert

advice on keeping indoor plants healthy and thriving with minimal effort. Learn how to create a tropical oasis in your home. This event is geared for all ages.

Cost: Adults \$3, seniors (60+) \$2, children (3-11) \$1.50. Members of Texas Discovery Gardens and children under 3 are admitted free. Call 214-428-7476 to find out more information.

03/20/04 (10:00 am) Stroller Strut: A Guided Garden Walk

See the garden through the eyes of your little one! This leisurely garden walk is specially designed for grandparents, parents and small children (infant-three years old). Delight in an experience for the senses - touch, smell, look and listen to the wonders of the garden. Smell fragrant herbs, listen to bird calls, touch "furry" plants and see flowers in a rainbow of colors.

This walk demonstrates how a healthy urban environment encourages children to explore and investigate the wonders of nature. Become a co-explorer with your toddler. Load up the stroller and make an adventure of it! (In case of rain, activities will be moved indoors.) Pat Dillehay, Education Coordinator at Texas Discovery Gardens will lead the walk.

CEMAP Gardening Opportunity!

Wednesday, February 18, 2004 9:00 AM

Texas A&M Research Facility on Coit at McCallum

Main Activity: Pull winter weeds

Bring: Hoe, trowel, knee pad, weeders. Note--A&M will provide some tools, but most MG's prefer to bring a favorite weeding tool.

Parking: Enter the A&M facility at the traffic light. Park near the pavilion and walk on the service road to the back. Gather near the gazebo and the white fence. There is a little parking room in the back; maybe you might find a spot; don't park on the grass. But there's plenty of parking in the front.



February is a busy time for gardeners here in Texas. It is the time of preparation—a time to plan, tidy-up, and prune. I spent several hours yesterday working around my small landscape. I know all of you will be working at these tasks over the next few weeks also.

Our organization is expending the same energy to increase our chances for success in 2004. Our project committees have been busy gathering ideas and planning, while members have taken the opportunity to attend the important workshop in Plant Pathology. We thank Dr. Kevin Ong for the chance to glean from his knowledge and know that we are better prepared to serve our community.

I have a kind of love-hate opinion about pruning. After all, the plants to be pruned have shown their mettle by thriving in our garden. Why mess with success? It is hard sometimes to realize that cutting back will actually improve vitality and encourage new growth. We have come to that point with our wonderful Horticulture Therapy Project which has been on-going for the past two years. The easy routine of this project, coupled with the minimal time requirement, may not be attractive to new interns who are eager to accumulate hours in larger chunks of time. However, for those who have taken time out of their day to make this short visit and participate, the payback of feeling good about contributing to another's well-being has been immeasurable. Unless members and interns come forward to take on the responsibility of sharing the team leadership roles, we will have to cut the project from our volunteer activities. We have all learned how important timing is when it comes to pruning. At this time in our organization's life, it is questionable if 'pruning' this volunteer activity will encourage new growth and vitality. If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Diane Poston.

Thank you so much for the notes I received from many of you at the Graduation banquet and the warm sentiments they contained. The lovely box and messages will be keepsakes I will always cherish. I sincerely appreciate the special recognition I received that evening.

Dear Fellow Master Gardeners,

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the flowers you sent to my Mom's funeral. As you can see, they were gorgeous; Mom would have loved them, and I certainly did.

The cards, calls, and e-mails you sent lent me much support and comfort. I was reminded again and again what a wonderful, caring group of women and men you are, and how lucky I am to be a part of our splendid organization.

Sara Garretson





DESIGNER'S CHALLENGE: Master Gardener Style

SITE DESCRIPTION:

Nestled among mature native Chiquapin, Bur and Red Oaks, Western Soapberry trees, and a scattering of redbuds, the Whitehurst Education Building at the Dallas Texas A&M Research and Extension Center is primed and ready for your creative native plant palette and design. The red brick façade, with its multiple arches, faces west. Only splashes of sun penetrate the foliage of these trees from spring through fall, and the play of light and shadows enhance the entry and its surroundings. The existing beds contain a varied hodgepodge of shade to part sun tolerant native plants.

THE CHALLENGE:

We have been given the exciting opportunity to put our signature on the plant design for these entry planting beds which will be installed, maintained and budgeted for with our help.

Look at the photos— better yet, visit the site. Then call or e-mail Scherle Barth (Barth6@juno.com) for a copy of the site plan. Next, use your knowledge and imagination, do the necessary research, and come up with an innovative design of native plants (both woody and perennial) that will marry the Whitehurst building with its beautiful native Blackland surroundings. All submitted designs and plant suggestions will be considered. The final plant list and design will be submitted by the Native Plant Keeper's and approved by Dr. Wayne MacKay, Associate Resident Director.

Next CCMGA Meeting:

Thursday, February 26th, noon

At the Heard

Our guest speaker will be Mike Sutton, Horticulturist, who will de-mystify the topic of TURF. Please come and welcome a fellow Master Gardener

IS THIS HAPPENING IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?



**The month is not even half over
and I have quit walking for
pleasure in my little corner of the
world.**

**Our HOAs complain about the
eyesores of sunflowers in alleys
and birdhouses on fences. Where
is the justice?**

**We will make it through another
February, and so will the battered
Crape Myrtles—you'll see.
They'll be painfully apparent next
February!**



News you can Use: “Still looking for an environmentally-friendly insecticide that won't harm beneficial insects, but still sticks it to pesky pests? You may need to look no further. “ Dr. Mike Merchant says: “Spinosad (pronounced spin OH sid) is a relatively new insect killer that quickly and safely controls a variety of caterpillar, beetle and thrips pests”.

READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE AT:

INSECTS IN THE CITY™ Website: <http://citybugs.tamu.edu/IntheNews>
“A PESTICIDE TO MAKE ORGANIC GARDENERS SMILE”

NEW BOOK ALERT!—

There is a new book out on home landscaping. THIS ONE is unique, however, because is about home landscaping in Texas, and it is a do-it-yourself manual. For those of us who have a passion for gardening books, the cost of \$!9.95 is downright refreshing! Nancy Furth

Written by Greg Grant and Roger Holmes, HOME LANDSCAPING TEXAS is a Creative Homeowner publication and part of their *Home Landscaping* series. The book contains step-by-step plans and plant illustrations to entice the novice home landscaper as well as the more experienced gardener. The authors have effectively covered the basics and beyond by including a portfolio of designs, guides to installations and plant profiles. As Jerry Parsons, PhD, Professor and Extension Horticulturist for the Texas Cooperative Extension puts it: “*Home Landscaping: Texas* makes it too easy. Great Texas designers using proven Texas plants are just what the doctor ordered. If you can't make these plans work at your home, we can't help you!”

Landscape Design Study Course II, February 23-25, 2004

Christ United Methodist Church, 4201 State Hwy 6, College Station, TX 77845

Presented by the Texas Garden Clubs, Incorporated & Texas Cooperative Extension For more information go to <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/04flyer.html>

~classified ad~
WANTED

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER for THE ECHO NEWSLETTER

IMMEDIATE OPENINGS for a dedicated 2-person team to gather news, compose articles, edit copy, and publish this newsletter bi-monthly. This team will also be responsible for making hard copies and posting them by snail mail to our members without e-mail access. Adobe Acrobat Writer, version 6, will be provided to the Publisher. Volunteer training in Microsoft Publisher will also be available upon request.

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