INSIDE THIS ISSUE
• Keith’s Column - pg. 2
• E-Mail Grapevine - pg. 2
• Underground Society - pg. 2
• Rathbone’s Ramblings - pg. 3
• Pot Plants for Winter - pg. 3
• New Addresses - pg. 3
• IDEA Series - pg. 4
• Double Feature - pg. 4
• Get Green - calendar back

MG Meeting Program
The November 1st meeting program will be presented by Dr. Brent Pemberton, Professor of Ornamental Horticulture and Plant Physiology at the Texas A&M University Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Overton.

He will talk about Travels and Trends in Ornamental Horticulture. His presentation will include photographs of gardens he has visited in his travels.

Nominees for 2008 Officers
The Nominating Committee would like to thank all of the nominees for saying “Yes” when asked to serve as officers for 2008. Members of the committee were Sue Adee, Anne Brown, June McClain, Jean Watson and Jan Moch. The slate of those nominated will be presented at the November MG meeting. Here are just a few facts about each of the nominees:

President: John Brasher has helped with labeling in the Tyler Municipal Rose Garden, Heritage Garden and the IDEA Garden. He is a volunteer for Junior Master Gardeners, Ag-cation and the new Agri-World at the East Texas State Fair.

President-Elect/Vice President: Cindy Harrington was Class 13 Intern of the Year, is an IDEA Garden Coordinator, helped with Agri-World, the Fall Gardening Conference and Habitat for Humanity.

Secretary: Scherel Carver is the current secretary and has agreed to serve another year in this important office. Scherel has also served on the Home Garden Tour committee and works hard coordinating the yearly Northeast Texas Gardening Guide.

Treasurer: Ann Smith volunteered to work
See Nominees page 3

IDEA Garden Plant Database
It has taken time to develop it and it will take more time before it is complete. Even though the IDEA Garden Plant database on the web is still under construction, you are encouraged to take a look. The list of plants is basically complete while the addition of the plant images continues.

For several years Keith Hansen has taken pictures of the plants and flowers in the garden during every month of the year. He continues the time consuming task of searching his files of pictures selecting the image most representative of each plant. The selected images are resized and ultimately loaded up to the web.

Many of us has visited various web sites looking for plant identification and were disappointed to find less than adequate images which were fuzzy or off color. You will not be disappointed when visiting the IDEA Garden plant database where the images are sharp with correct color, a true representation of the plant and/or bloom.

To view the database on the SCMG website, go to the IDEA Garden, open the IDEA Garden Plant Database and then click on “Display All Plants” and go from page to page.

Thirsty?
We have 15 cases of Nestle's bottled water at the Extension office left over from our Agri-World exhibit at the East Texas State Fair. There are 32 - 16 oz (.5 liter) bottles per case. If you typically buy bottled water by the case, please consider dropping by the office and pick up a case or 2 - they are $4.50 each, payable to Derrick Bruton (the 4-H Extension agent who put the bill on his personal charge).
The year is winding down, and so are MG volunteer and Continuing Education opportunities to get your hours. One area where you can easily get some of both is by writing one or more Tip of the Week articles. Linda Sargent informs me that she is down to the last 2!! This leaves several months (5) to go without fresh tips. Even if you do not need any hours, I hope many of you would please consider writing a brief tip or 2 or 3. (In the past months few have answered the call for new tips). It can be about a favorite plant, a different, new or old, or innovative gardening technique or gadget, a landscaping or vegetable gardening tip. It doesn’t have to be long; as a matter of fact, short is good. Maybe about 125 to 175 words. This paragraph to the end of this sentence contains about 130 words. It doesn’t have to be something related to this time of year, though that would also be helpful. Remember to NOT write about home remedies for pest control. Please send your tips to either Keith or directly to Linda Sargent. Thanks.

Another way to earn recertification is to take the EARTH-KIND™ On-Line Master Gardener Training. This program is designed to provide information on a variety of environmentally friendly (EARTH-KIND) practices for use in the home landscape and garden. As your interest and knowledge in this area grows you will have an increased awareness of the many programs, practices and activities that are EARTH-KIND. Texas Master Gardeners can select from any of these on-line modules to obtain up to 3 hours of re-certification credit. Each module is worth 1 hour of credit. The module consists of 1) a video covering an Earth-Kind topic, and 2) a quiz to gauge your knowledge of that topic. Be sure to follow instructions for taking the quiz. After you complete a quiz, I am sent a notification regarding completion of the that module.

Keep an eye out for an announcement on the Earth Kind rose trial we’ll be putting in at Lindsey Park this month in November. We are almost ready to set the date for planting, and we’ll need lots of hands to make light work on the day of planting. Bob Shearer came back from the Earth-Kind Advanced Training in Odessa enthusiastic about the program and full of great ideas. He will be working with Craig Reiland and me to coordinate this significant research trial that will include 3 replicates of 30 roses (90 total) to test for hardiness and disease resistance, using only compost and mulch (no fertilizers) as a source of nutrients in the sandy soil, and no pesticides for pest control. It will be interesting to watch these roses over the next several years to see how well they do with this minimal input.

I want to thank everybody who has served as a Rose Garden Tour Guide this year. This being our first year was a time of learning and we’ll be meeting soon to evaluate the program and see how we can improve the experience for both the tour guides and touring groups. Many thanks to Jean Watson for her leadership coordinating the tours this year, and also to Craig Reiland for working closely with this great group of Master Gardeners.

In the near future, you will see a new look to my East Texas Gardening website. I’m hoping you will find it easier to find information in the site. It may undergo further tweaking as I get feedback from viewers with comments, etc. I do welcome your comments and suggestions on the site.

**MG Grapevine via E-Mail**

Do you receive the *MG Grapevine* via e-mail? At the their October meeting, the Executive Committee discussed why so few of you have your copy of the newsletter sent to you via e-mail. Is it because you don’t feel comfortable dealing with the computer, opening a PDF file and printing it? We can tell you how easy it is to do those things, but we may not convince all of you and we understand. For the rest of you, why not switch to the electronic version? It is in full color and you can read it on your screen or print it at your leisure.

Just tell Martin Davis at mred2853@sbcglobal.net that you want to receive the e-mail version and he will make the change.

**Beginning this month** the *MG Grapevine* will be available on the SCMG website in full view for easy reading without the need to download the PDF file. Check it out and let us know if you like it.

**Is East Texas Ready for “Underground” Society?**

Did the fall MG bulb sale pique your interest in daffodils and all things *narcissus*? Would you like to know more about them—beyond the knowledge that they are harbingers of spring? You might be interested in joining an East Texas daffodil society devoted to these beautiful, tough, reliable “underground” plants.

The Texas Daffodil Society recently amended their bylaws to allow for local chapters throughout the state, operating under the state bylaws. Each chapter will have its own

See *Underground* page 4
Rathbone's Ramblings

October, always busy, has passed in a whirl this year. From plant sales to garden talks to taking visitors through the Rose Garden to actually trying to get work done in my own garden, it seems this month has passed in the blink of an eye.

Our taste of cooler weather has also been most welcome. It always raises my spirits when I can turn off the air conditioning and let some fresh air into my house, and the cooler mornings make working in the garden a pleasure instead of the chore it is at the height of summer. I’m happy to say that everything I bought at both the bulb sale and at SFA has been planted, but since I’ve got major moving, dividing and mulching yet to do, I’m really grateful for the cooler weather.

The weather service is telling us that this will be a La Nina winter and that means warmer than normal temperatures and, unfortunately lower than normal rainfall. Thankfully, we were blessed by lots of rain last winter and throughout the spring, but I dread starting the drought cycle all over again. Luckily, we aren’t as starved for water as is most of the southeast where the drought has reached dangerous levels. I’m still hoping that NOAA has made errors in their long-range weather forecast.

Soon the holidays will be upon us and this year I’m looking forward to going back to St Louis where we’ll be spending Thanksgiving with family and taking the opportunity to buy our St. Louis Christmas presents the following week. It will be a Thanksgiving with family and taking the opportunity to buy our forward to going back to St Louis where we’ll be spending

As we move into November, I hope we all take time to give thanks to the blessings of the season, and to enjoy the fruits of our gardening labors throughout the year. Take some time to enjoy the cooler weather and the beauty of your gardens, and look forward to the quiet of winter in the garden.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving and Happy Gardening!

New E-Mail Addresses

Andy Griffin, Jr. Lindalougriffin@embarqmail.com
Tamara Listiak scotamara@embarqmail.com
June McClain twojays910@embarqmail.com
Linda Sargent silverset@embarqmail.com

New Addresses

John Woolverton, 10803 Knollwood Dr., Tyler, TX 75703
Gary Graham, P.O. Box 185, Winona, TX 75792

Readying up the Pot Plants for Winter

by Dee Bishop

“Run the lizzards out, trim ’em back good, wash the pots off nice, and wash the winders good so’s they can get all the light this winter.” Grandma’s words of wisdom still hold true, only maybe just a little ‘new’ idea or two to add. Bringing in houseplants is always one of the chores I kinda dread. I enjoy them so much during dreary winter days, but ugh, the mess they create. Here are a few things I have picked up along the way and through the years.

You really do need to check for stowaways. Lizzards, frogs, toads, skinks, not to mention bugs, especially roaches, are often down inside the soil. I like to pull the plant ball out and look it over an maybe rub off some of the soil and reset it. Wash all the leaves with some soapy water and water well. Trim the plant back if it needs it. I love bringing impatiens inside my kitchen as they bloom all winter long. They need to be cut way back now so they can grow and bloom. Fertilize them with time release granules and they will perform well in a sunny window as will coleus and torenia

Systemic insecticide granules will cut way down on pests and disease. Mealy bugs and whiteflies are always a big pest on inside plants. The plants are under stress while inside and need all the help they can get.

Plant saucers or containers are a must. Just remember to dump them after each watering, or put something under the pot to keep it up out of the water. Fruit flies will drive you out of your home if you don’t take care of that chore.

There isn’t enough light in anyone’s house in winter, especially during long periods of cloudy weather so I have some standing lights that I put over my plants throughout the winter and it really helps.

Doing these things will make everything simpler later. Enjoy the fall and bring in part of the summer for winter.

Nominees continued from page 1

at the Market on the Square this year, is on the Home Garden Tour committee, helped with the Fall Gardening Conference and helps at Overton.

Executive Committee At-Large:  J. D. Woods volunteers at Overton and has donated several bird houses for Master Gardener projects.  Monica Klein volunteers on the Home Garden Tour committee, helped with the Fall Gardening Conference and at Overton.

State Director:  Harvey Collen volunteered to help with Agri-World at the East Texas State Fair this year, coordinated transportation for the Fall Gardening Conference and helps at Overton.

Alternate State Director:  Carl Caskey was in Class 11 and has helped with several Master Gardener projects.

Historian Elect:  Doris Waits has served as Historian in the past and did such a great job that she was ask to repeat. Doris is also a Rose Garden docent and helps with almost every tour.
officers and executive board, which will include one liaison from the Executive Board of the Texas Daylily Society. Local executive boards have authority to schedule local meetings.

This means that members in East Texas would be able to participate locally—without travel to the Metroplex or other areas of the state—to learn more about selecting and growing daffodils. Activities might include informational meetings or workshops and a daylily show judged by certified judges from the American Daffodil Society.

If you are interested in joining the efforts to promote daffodils in East Texas, become a member now. Dues are $10/yr. Payment makes you a member of both the Texas society and the local group.

Mail to: Texas Daffodil Society, c/o Treasurer Sue John, 25 Highland Park Village #100-555, Dallas TX 75705.

For more info on the Texas Daffodil Society, check out the new web site at www.texasdaffodilsociety.org.

Contact Scherel Carver for more information.
Gardeners, As Plants Turn Brown, Get Green

Though a hint of fall is in the air, at least one more gardening task remains - take the online Earth-Kind Challenge.

Whether you score a piddly one frog or a hopping five, the site provides feedback about how to be a better steward of the land through gardening and landscape practices, according to Dr. Don Wilkerson, Texas Cooperative Extension horticulturist and Earth-Kind advocate.

"The more frogs you score, the more you are doing to help preserve and protect the environment in which we live," Wilkerson said. "And the other thing that's cool is that for each response you give, the test responds with ideas of what you might do to be even better at environmental stewardship."

Earth-Kind is an Extension program that "combines organic and traditional gardening and landscaping principles to create a horticultural system based on real-world effectiveness and environmental responsibility," he noted.

The test, at http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/EarthKind/EKChallenge.html, asks about a person's landscape design, mulching habits and use of irrigation. It also queries one's habits in fertilizer and pesticide use, composting, rainfall harvesting and provisions for wildlife habitats.

Throughout the 25-question test, links to Extension fact sheets provide information for quick learning, he said.

"That way, if you score a 70-80 (three or four frogs) like most of us, you get some instant messages about what can be done to get a higher score," Wilkerson said. "A person can find out where they stand in the environment and figure out what to do better. It may be as simple as reducing yard waste by composting." A three-page flyer on composting, for example, is linked to the question about what percent of yard wastes are bagged and placed curbside for disposal, he noted.

"If a person admits to placing most grass clippings and leaves in bags bound for a landfill, a low score might lead him or her to click on the information to learn how to make use of such waste in a way that will improve the soil," Wilkerson said.

Such a test with a useful guideline could simplify the gardening experience at a time when keeping consumers interested in growing plants is critically important, according to Anna Ball, president and CEO of Ball Horticultural Co.

"Here we are the 'green industry' and most of the elements of gardening are seen as negatives: chemicals, water, energy, time and physical work," Ball said at the Distinguished Floriculture Lecture held recently at Texas A&M University. "Sustainability is the next wave. Plants grown this way are prettier, they attract the young generation, and they breathe new life into our industry."

As chief executive officer of a 100-year-old family horticulture business, Ball said, using "green" practices both internally for company practices and externally for consumers will help the industry grow while helping the environment. "We need to make it easy for our customers," Ball added.

Wilkerson said the Earth-Kind test is but one feature available from Extension for people who want to learn ways to beautify living spaces while not harming the environment.

An online Earth-Kind plant selector lets the user enter particulars such as "red flowers, grows in shade and gets 3-feet tall," Wilkerson said. The database then provides a list of the best landscape plants, specific to the user's region, with the best drought, heat and pest tolerance, he said.

The Earth-Kind site, http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/EarthKind/, also has links to beneficial insects, rainfall harvesting, Earth-Kind roses and Texas urban landscapes. Visitors to the Web site also can subscribe to a free monthly newsletter for tips, watch 'green' how-to videos and download podcasts.