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MG Grapevine Staff
Martin Davis, Editor
Dee Bishop

MG Grapevine Contributors:
Dee Bishop, Merlin Eck, Keith Hansen,
Ann Kelley and Andie Rathbone

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MG Meeting Speaker
Keith Hansen, our speaker for the September meeting needs no introduction. The subject of his presentation is, “Fall Weeds to Watch Out For”, something we all need to know.

Fall Garden Conference & Bulb Sale
Quoting Merlin Eck, “We are full speed ahead! Everything looks great and we will have the clay pots at the next meeting for the folks to observe. We will have the raffle items there as well. Members can buy tickets for themselves and take blank ones home for last minute pre-sales. We will go over receipt writing, ticket writing, cashier duties, sales techniques, etc.”

The two featured speakers for the conference are Steven Chamblee and Keith Kridler.

Steven L. Chamblee, is the chief horticulturist for Chandor Gardens in Weatherford. He also serves as a consulting editor for Neil Sperry’s Gardens magazine. Chamblee’s topic, "Texas Tough Plants," will focus on heat and drought tolerant plants adapted to East Texas.

The other featured speaker will be Keith Kridler, a cultivator of antique and modern daffodils. His speciality is antique daffodils that are no longer grown, and his collection includes more than 900 named varieties.

Following the conference at 11:30AM, the bulb sale opens at Harvey Hall with thousands of heritage bulbs on sale. New this year will be potted plants and other plants. The photo exhibit and contest entries will be on display as well.

Detailed information about the event is available at the Smith County MG website and at Keith’s “East Texas Gardening site.

2008 Calendar/Gardening Guide
This year’s calendar, available at the Fall Gardening Conference, features a photograph of the IDEA Garden by Keith Hansen on the cover and features month-by-month lists of things to do in the garden, monthly frequently asked questions, as well as useful web sites and gardening events throughout the year. Additionally, this year’s edition features full page articles on rainwater harvesting, poisonous plants, container gardening and accessible gardening.

Thanks to Barbara Krizan, Joan Thorpe and Herb Coursey for the monthly things to do and to Cindy Harrington for the monthly FAQ’s. Also Herb Coursey for compiling the 2008 Gardening Events and checking our grammar, to Sue Clark for the article on rainwater harvesting, to Anne Brown for the articles on Container and Accessible gardening and to Sylvia Hofmann for providing information on the plants-of-the-month. Thanks also to Keith Hansen for the beautiful cover photo and for assuring our horticultural accuracy; Martin Davis for formatting the calendar’s front and back covers; and Sue Adee, and Ed & Jo Helen McGee for proofreading for typographical errors. And special thanks to Scherel Carver who formatted, typed and corrected the copy multiple times. See Calendar, page 2

Our Secret Garden
Agri-World is new at this year’s East Texas State Fair and will include SCMG’s Secret Garden. This new project began with an idea and a clean sheet of paper and has blossomed into a complex display, especially for children, but worth seeing by all fair-goers. The Commercial Exhibits Building is the location of the display. See Garden, page 2
The Fall Conference and Plant Expo is right around the corner and Merlin and his crew have done an outstanding job getting ready for this great event. The program will be entertaining and informative, and the plant sale provides excellent sources of new beauty for our gardens (and generate support for our many educational programs). This is a great opportunity to get both continuing education credits and volunteer hours. All hands are needed on deck, especially during the sale, so make plans to be there to learn and help.

Plans for the new educational exhibits for the East Texas State Fair are coming along nicely. We are looking forward to having a prominent and dynamic exhibit that will be seen by the thousands of youth and adult visitors to the Fair.

We are beginning the process of uploading plant photos to the IDEA Garden database. It will take some time to get them all converted and uploaded, but it will be a great educational resource that should attract a lot of interest. Also, be sure to visit the Smith County Master Gardener web site. Martin continues to make additions and improvements, making it a real valuable information resource to both Smith County Master Gardeners and the public at large.

I’ve started a blog (short for web log) to explore the possibilities of using this medium for communicating current events, pest alerts, musings on controlling moles and a venue to publish short essays and photos on some of my favorite plants. Let me know what you think: http://tceblogs.tamu.edu/mt/etg

I’ve had several MG’s express interest in our proposed PowerPoint training. We will be scheduling it for sometime in October – I’ll be sending out an email notice when the date is set. If you have not contacted me yet, but are interested in attending to learn how to create a PowerPoint slide set as an aid in giving educational programs, please send me an email.

See you in September.

Have you seen a butterfly in the IDEA Garden? Check the IDEA page on the SCMG website. He is flying there.

Calendar continued from page 1

Tell all your friends or purchase one for them. They make great Christmas stocking stuffers. It is available at the Extension Office and at the following locations for $5.00 each: Al H. Horaney’s, Inc; Aunt Lillian’s Antiques, Troup; Blue Moon Gardens; Breidelove Nursery; Center Chemical; Harris Nursery; and in the Hideaway Lake area from Pat Kashouty.

It is also available at Ingram Nursery; Kirkpatrick’s Hardware, Gresham; The Market, Whitehouse; Noonday Hardware, In The Wind on Loop 323 in Tyler, Noonday Feed & Seed; Southland Feed & Supply, Tyler; as well as the Extension Office.

The guide can also be ordered by mail for $7.00 from: Andie Rathbone, 13270 Oak Hill Lane, Flint, TX 75762. Make checks payable to Smith County Master Gardeners.

Garden continued from page 1

As you step into the building, Our Secret Garden will be seen in the middle of the hall. Walking through the garden you will see displays on plants, recycling, composting, vermiculture, rainwater harvesting, insects, herbs, Junior Master Gardeners and backyard habitat. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the garden.

A special thanks to the Texas Nursery & Landscape Association and to Chamblee’s Rose Nursery for their participation.

The display will be in place for the duration of the fair run which is from September 20 to 29.

New E-Mail Addresses

Kay Chambers - kchambers4404@att.net
Jana Bowman - janalucy@suddenlink.com
Pat Kashouty - mayor-bk-1938@att.net
John Brasher - westgent@embarqmail.com

New Address & Phone No.

Cindy Harrington, 16738 CR 192, Tyler 75703
Cell Phone 903-570-1183 (has only a cell phone for now)
Although it is still hot outside, the plants seem to know that fall is on the way. The hummingbirds are madly drinking the nectar in the feeders, as well as buzzing around the salvias, caryopteris and hamelia. They’re “bulking up” in preparation for taking flight, sometime this month, to their winter homes in Mexico and South America. When I’m walking my dog in the woods, I’ve noticed the fall ageratum starting to bloom and the asters and mums are starting to put forth buds for their fall bloom season.

Our own organization is busy preparing for the upcoming Fall Conference and Plant Expo. I’m looking forward to hearing the speakers and seeing those bulbs and plants snapped up quickly at the sale. If you’re a photographer, be sure to enter the photo contest, and maybe you’ll win and find your picture as the cover of the 2009 MG calendar and gardening guide. Also remember there are some great items available for raffle, so buy (and sell!) some tickets.

John Brasher and his committee are also busy putting together AgriWorld for the East Texas State Fair. They are building a wonderful educational exhibit; The Secret Garden, that will feature rainwater harvesting, a butterfly garden, composting and other educational displays. This will be a permanent exhibit that can be added and improved on in future years, and will educate and delight all the school children who will visit it during the fair. It looks like this will be another award winning project for our organization.

The other garden clubs in the area are starting to meet again and the Master Gardeners will be featured as speakers at many of their meetings. It’s great to see our members in such demand for their programs.

With all of these projects going on, it’s hard to find time to work in my own garden, which, as I usually say at this time of year, is too full of weeds for my liking. I’m looking forward to cooler mornings to get after them, and soon, I hope, cooler days to tackle some bigger projects on my list of things to do. As I think about the bulbs I want to plant and the plants I’ll be buying at the SFA sale in October, making more room in my beds (or brand new beds) is always on my “to do” list.

I hope you’ve all had a wonderful summer and are full of energy for the new gardening and gardening club season.

Happy gardening!

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**Althea, A Great Old Shrub**

by Dee Bishop

Hibiscus syriacus better known in it's single form as Althea or in it's double form as Rose of Sharon, is tried and true. As old as anyone's grandma, althea is nearly always found in older folks' yards. My Grandma cherished hers especially her double red one. She had every color in doubles and singles. She always put the left over dish water on one or the other if she wasn't throwing it on the orange tree out back.

If you want a shrub that can take a lot of drought, or alot of rain and perform wonderfully, then althea is for you too. They grow tall, about 10ft. and maybe 6-8ft. wide at the top. They are funnel shaped, narrow at the base and wide at the top. I like to plant an althea where I need some shade in summer. Things will grow under it fairly well. The newer ones will bloom much longer because they are supposedly sterile. Some of mine do make seed, but I have not had seedlings come up yet, so maybe the seeds are sterile. I have seen hummingbirds and butterflies drinking from the blooms. They are easy to start from cuttings. Just place a nice cutting in water until white spots are on the stem, then put it in soil. You can just poke the stem into the ground where you want it in early spring and it will grow.

The double ones sometimes become infested with thrips, but I have never had them attack my single ones. I do water mine about once every week or two in summer droughts. Otherwise, they need no other care. If you have the old ones back.

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The double ones sometimes become infested with thrips, but I have never had them attack my single ones. I do water mine about once every week or two in summer droughts. Otherwise, they need no other care. If you have the old ones that make nine million seeds, you may want to cut them back. So you won't be inundated with seedlings next year.

Look for some of the newer cultivars, of which you can see two in the IDEA Garden. Plant them where you can enjoy their many blooms all summer.

**New Book in Library**

Marilyn Helm recently made a contribution to the Master Gardener library of The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Orchids, edited by Alec Pridgeon. The book was donated in memory of Luther Cecil Thomas who was the husband of Chris Rocket-Thomas. You may wish to look it over next time you are in the office. There are a number of good books in the library, which are there for your use.
IDEA Garden Series

The Smith County Master Gardeners will hold the first fall “First Tuesday in the Garden” educational programs at noon on Tuesday, September 4 in the IDEA Garden in the Tyler Rose Garden. This month’s talk is “Fall Bulbs for Spring Blooms”. Master Gardener Andie Rathbone will talk about bulbs, especially adapted for the South, that will provide beautiful blooms next spring.

The program will begin at noon and is free to the general public. Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, as seating is limited in the garden.

Other programs this fall include: October 2, “Trees for Fall Color” and November 6, “All Those Leaves! Don’t Bag Them, Make Compost.”

Work Day in the Garden

As summer draws to a close, work needed in the garden changes, offering a new challenge. The Heritage and IDEA Gardens are no different than your home garden and your help is appreciated.

Volunteer each Tuesday morning, joining others in making these gardens the garden show-place of Tyler.

Tyler Area Council of Garden Clubs

The Tyler Area Council of Garden Clubs will meet on Tuesday, September 4th at 10:00 AM in the Rose Room of the Tyler Rose Center.

This is the beginning of new administrations for National Garden Clubs, South Central Region and Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. There are many new projects that will be discussed in detail, so all garden club members will have a better understanding of how to implement them. This will be an informative meeting and the Council is inviting all interested garden club members to attend. Hospitality will start at 9:30 AM with the meeting starting at 10:00.

SFA to Host Fall Plant Sale

The annual Fabulous Fall Festival plant sale at Stephen F. Austin State University’s Mast Arboretum will be from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 6, at the intramural field on Wilson Drive, Nacogdoches.

A great selection of rare, unusual, and Texas-tough trees, shrubs, vines, herbaceous perennials, and grasses will be available. Staples of the fall sale include asters, garden mums, and sages, as well as several outstanding varieties of ornamental grasses.
SFA Mast Arboretum Garden Seminar

Improving Your Images with Digital Photography

Join Jeff Abt, landscape designer, garden writer, and photographer extraordinaire, to learn tricks and techniques for using your digital camera to capture incredible garden images.

September 15, 2007 - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Room 118, Agriculture Building, Wilson Drive, Nacogdoches.
To register, call 936-468-1832 or email ero dewald@sfasu.edu

Tap into Rainwater for In-Home Use

Location: Heard Museum (Science Resource Center Room), 1 Nature Place, McKinney, Texas
September 19, 2007 8:30AM - 4:00PM
Bruce Lesikar - Billy Kniffen
Registration cost $65
For questions regarding registration, please contact Texas A&M Conference Services at (979) 845-7694. Thanks!
For registration forms and complete agenda, go to Coming Events on the SCMG website.

Master Gardener Specialist - Plant Propagation - November 2-3, 2007
Montgomery County Extension Center, Conroe, Texas
The Master Gardener Specialist - Plant Propagation program is designed to train and certify Master Gardeners to become part of a state corps of Plant Propagation experts and educators. To become a certified Master Gardener Specialist - Plant Propagation, Master Gardeners are required to attend the Master Gardener Specialist - Plant Propagation training to fulfill training requirements and subsequently meet service requirements. Training activities during the course will empower Master Gardeners to complete these service requirements.
Registration fee: $125.00 (Includes dinner(1), lunch(1), snacks, drinks, propagation equipment.

Looking ahead.......... 

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference June 18-21, 2008
A Garden of Dreams in Native America.
The Oklahoma County Master Gardeners are hosting the event and are busy putting final details together for the conference. They are very excited about the opportunity to host the conference and have already put many, many hours into the planning and organization of this grand event!
You can now find general information at the conference web site http://www.mastergardener2008.com/. As more details are finalized they will be posted on the site, so visit regularly to keep updated on the latest news and additions. The conference site will be at the Clarion Meridian Hotel and Convention Center in Oklahoma City.