



### Mission Statement

To support and assist Texas Cooperative Extension by providing the community with information on horticultural practices consistent with Texas Cooperative Extension recommendations.



#### President's Notepad

After a long, cool spring, it is finally summer. I hope you enjoyed the Clark Gardens, the State Convention, the Tour of Gardens in Granbury and East Fort Worth. Yes, we have had that many opportunities to learn about horticulture and enjoy gardens in the past month outside of our usual activities. Many people work very hard to create these opportunities and I hope you have been able to participate in as many as possible.

In your own garden, there is that uncontrollable variable - weather. If you grow tomatoes, you have made the scientific observation that every year in North Central Texas is a "series of one". After you have optimized everything under your control, you wait and see how much weather is favorable to blossom set. Then, early blight and spider mites willing, you will get a few or many tomatoes. We all expect the latter.

There are three more specialist training courses this year. They are: oak wilt, propagation and Earthkind roses. Don't forget the Floral Design courses at A & M.

The Master Gardener experience is all about learning, gardening and sharing that knowledge and experience with others. See you at the June meeting in Grapevine.

Good gardening,  
Warren

#### June Monthly TCMGA Program

##### NEW TIME, NEW PLACE!!!!!!

Delaney Vineyard is the location for our June Meeting. We will **meet at 10:30 a.m.** You will need to **bring your lunch and a chair**; TCMGA will furnish the beverages. There will be a tour of the vineyard and wine tasting for those interested in a taste or two for comparison. We will have a brief business meeting to vote on the nominating committee members.

The folks at Delaney need a head count so **you MUST have called Crystal at 817 884 1296 (that's the Extension Office) by May 25<sup>th</sup>** if you plan to attend. After we finish at Delaney, we will visit two Master Gardener's gardens (don't miss these gardens). Maps will be available at the vineyard.

Directions to Delaney Vineyard: Going north on 121 from 183, take the Glade Road exit and stay on the access road, cross Glade and turn right on Champagne just past the shopping center (look for Hobby Lobby).

Going south on 121, take Glade road and make a u-turn under 121 and go north on the access road to Champagne, turn right.

Bring your \$\$\$\$money\$\$\$\$. Delaney has a gift shop and wine to sell AND we will also have a chance to buy inexpensive plants at another stop.

See you on June 2nd at 10:30 a.m.

Ginger Bason

### Hospitality Notes by Joyce Quam

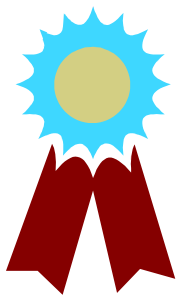
Our June Master Gardener meeting will be at the Delaney Vineyard in Grapevine. Bring your lunch and a chair. Water and pop provided. (What, no wine?) See you there and Happy Gardening!



## TCMGA wins awards at Master Gardener State Convention

The State Convention was a big success and all the TCMGA members that attended enjoyed the event. TCMGA was honored with AWARDS, AWARDS, AWARDS!!!!!!

Awards are given by group size; TCMGA competes in the Large Associations category. TCMGA received the following awards:



**1ST. PLACE , PROJECTS COMPETITION** for Alice Carlson Project

**3RD. PLACE, MULTI-MEDIA COMPETITION** for TCMGA Website

**3RD.PLACE, POSTER COMPETITION**

**3RD PLACE, EXHIBIT COMPETITION**

and.... **MASTER GARDENER of THE YEAR - Eleanor Tuck.**

This means TCMGA received awards in FIVE of nine categories!!!!!! CONGRATULATIONS TCMGA!!!!!!

**Eleanor Tuck** also won the Sherry Lanza Award for accomplishment and outstanding service . This award is given to ONE master gardener in Texas, so SHE'S the BEST, but we all knew that!!!! CONGRATULATIONS ELEANOR!!!!!!

Also awarded at the State Convention:

Certificates and pins for completing the Propagation Specialist Training were awarded to **Pat Lovejoy, Mary Margaret Halleck, Ben Oefinger, and Gailon Hardin,**

**Hester Schwarzer** received a pin for completing JMG Specialist Training.

Thank you to all the people that worked on submitting our entries: **Emily Ward, Eleanor Tuck, Tammy Edwards, JoAnn Hahn, Carolyn Barnard, Derald Freeman, Susan Stanek, Sharon Chastain, Edith Pewitt and Ginger Bason.** It's a big job.

Submitted by **Ginger Bason,** Awards Committee Chair





### TCMGA Garden Conservancy Tour

Have you looked at  
[www.gardenconservancy.org](http://www.gardenconservancy.org)?

Our tour with Garden Conservancy is coming  
up October 9th —  
Estate Gardens of Tarrant County.

More details coming soon .....

## Happy Birthday, Master Gardeners!

- 6-1 Tillie Ransom;
- 6-2 Carol Turner;
- 6-3 Ginger Bason, Jan Hicks;
- 6-4 Sue Ann Spurlock, Harry Dehnisch;
- 6-7 Marlys Karsh;
- 6-8 Dixie Norwood, Janice Newbrand,  
Bill Harris;
- 6-9 Penny McCook, Johnnie Braddock;
- 6-13 Jo Ann Muray;
- 6-14 Mary Helen Young;
- 6-15 Karen Lang-Ferrel,
- 6-18 Vera Beck;
- 6-20 Susan Smith; 6-22 Faye Dale;
- 6-23 Blake Hardy; 6-28 Donna Morris,
- 6-29 Ann Phipps

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The December Christmas Awards/  
Social will be on the 2nd Thursday  
in December (8th) - one week later  
than our usual monthly meeting.

Mark your calendars now!!!!



### MG DIRECTORY JUNE UPDATES

**Shirley Helmick** moved to Pennsylvania

**Dorothy Launius** 817-488-3520  
dorothy@launius.net

**Renee Ramsey**  
**Renee Shearer**  
4361 Ridgedale Ave.  
Odessa, TX 79762  
817-432-9776 (cell)  
wildprairie@grandecom.net

**Ed Vaughn** edvaun23@sbcglobal.net

Note: Master Gardeners are welcome to  
submit articles to the newsletter for  
consideration. All non-regular features  
should be submitted to **Linda Hardy** at  
hardyjandl@netzero.net.

The newsletter editorial staff reserves the  
right to edit articles submitted  
for content, brevity, and correctness.

## TCMGA Spirit Committee

I would like to take a moment and thank you for the wonderful work you have all done in supporting Tarrant County as well as Extension this year. So many of you have unselfishly volunteered a tremendous amount of hours and time for the benefit of our community. Believe me it shows and there are many people that are in your debt.

This first six months has been a whirlwind and doesn't look like it's going to slow down anytime soon. The positive side of it is every time I looked up and took a breath, one or more of you were working right along with me. I am still in the process of visiting all of your wonderful projects, my goal is to visit each and every one in the next month or so. To this end it has been suggested to me that we find some new and innovative ways of awarding recognition to our Master Gardeners for all of these superb projects. The goal being individual recognition as well as group recognition for all of the wonderful projects being maintained by you.

**Warren Tingley** and I were talking the other day of the possibility of forming a 'Spirit Committee', composed of at least one member from each year the TCMGA has been in existence. This committee would meet and discuss possible ways to recognize both individual and group efforts. Extension has a committee similar to this and they have come up with some wonderful innovative ideas to recognize our Extension colleagues.

This committee would ideally meet every quarter or more if needed to brainstorm and then make suggestions that could then be implemented. As in any undertaking such as this, there is a commitment that must be made for time and lots of thought. My pledge to you is that I will be there in the trenches with you, brainstorming and working to help make this association the best in Texas. If you will work with me on this, we should continue to grow and excel and reach all of our

individual goals as well as our group goals.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience so that we can get this committee off the drawing board and working industriously to help make this association the best it can be.

Sincerely  
**Steve Chaney**



## TCMGA CONGRATULATES

### **DR. DOROTHY M. WOODSON**

Dr. Woodson was awarded the Doctor of Education degree in Agricultural Education on May 14, 2005 from Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas.

Dotty received her B.S. in 1989 and M.S. in 1991, both from Tarleton State University. Dotty is beginning her 10th year with Texas Cooperative Extension and Tarrant County.

**New Items**

**#399 Gardening with Dotty last Tuesday monthly Dotty Woodson 817-884-1296**

<b><u>Project Code &amp; Name</u></b>	<b><u>Work Days/Times</u></b>	<b><u>Project Manager</u></b>	<b><u>Managers Phone</u></b>
301 BRIT Activities	call chairman	Kay Yount	817-292-7690
311 Perennial Garden	8:30 a.m., Weds.	Patsy Johnson	817-292-5358
312 Trial Garden Maintenance	1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Tues.	Carole O'Connell	817-921-0713
312 Trial Garden Data	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Tues.	Carole O'Connell	817-921-0713
313 BG Cottage Garden	call chairman	Diane Clark	817-249-2760
321 Thistle Hill	1st, 3rd Weds. 9:30 a.m.	Emily Ward	817-281-5925
322 Union Gospel Mission	every Mon. 8 a.m.	Gay Larson	817-441-6560
323 Grapevine Botanic Garden	call chairman	Rachel Clark	817-488-0035
324 Mansfield Main St. Proj.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed. 9 a.m.	Donna Turner	817-473-8253
325 Weston Gardens Docent	call chairman	Rose Marie Mercado	817-923-9555
326 Teen Challenge	every Wed. 9 a.m.	Debbie Bollinger	817-498-1508
399 Gardening with Dotty	last Tuesday monthly	Dotty Woodson	817-884-1296
401 Composting Demo	1 <sup>st</sup> Sat. 2nd Sat.	Don Graves Charlie Shiner	817-465-1667 817-548-7117
402 FW Nature Center	call chairman	Leeann Rosenthal	817-237-7180
403 FW Library at Hulen St.	4th Thurs, 8:30 am	Evaline Woodrey	817-295-4683
404 SW Sub Courthouse	2nd Sat, 4th Wed.	Gailon Hardin	817-457-4703
405 Liberty Garden	call chairman	Wendi Carlucci	817-488-5640
406 Veterans Park-Wildscape	Tues 9-12:00	Gailon Hardin	817-457-4703
407 Willow Park Demo Garden	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	Judy Ratzlaff	817-441-6726
408 TX Smartscape Demo	call chairman	Michael Warren	817-531-6765
612 Henrietta Creek Orchard	1 <sup>st</sup> Mon. or 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed.	Sue Short	817-439-3202

**School Gardens**

601 Alice Carlson	8:30 a.m. Mon/Thurs	Sharon Chastain	817 926-2575
602 Bransom	call chairman	Glenda Page	817 447-8348
603 Brewer	call chairman	Joyce Hallbauer	817 367-3582
604 Fitzgerald	3:15 p.m. Wed	Leeann Rosenthal	817 237-7180
605 Oakhurst	Contact Ginger	Ginger Bason	817 838-7321
606 South Davis	call chairman	Mary McCoy	817 891-0598
611 Children's Garden	Apr 6 & 27 9-11 a.m.	Judy Sargent	817 589-0221

## GRAPEVINE BOTANICAL GARDEN AT HERITAGE PARK

**Submitted by  
Shari Stanfield, TCMGA 2002**

The Grapevine Botanical Garden is a true work of art located in Heritage Park at the intersection of Ball and Wall streets just west of downtown.

### Beginnings of the Garden

The Garden was the vision of City Council member C. Shane Wilbanks, who, after a trip to a similar garden in Kansas, felt that the City of Grapevine would benefit tremendously from a peaceful respite such as this Botanical Garden. The Garden was designed by Oliver Windham, landscape architect, and constructed by Randall & Blake, Inc. of Southlake, at a cost of \$230,000 for the first two phases.

Phase I construction began in the summer of 2000 at a cost of \$93,338, and included walkways, benches, new turf, irrigation and color flowerbeds. August 23, 2001, marked the dedication and grand opening of Phase II of the Garden, which cost \$121,555. This phase was built in a natural bowl area behind the Bessie Mitchell Meeting Facility and featured hard and soft walking trails, a stage, gazebo, retaining walls, color flowerbeds and a waterfall and pond. When the third and final phase is completed, the City will have spent approximately \$500,000 on the Botanical Garden. The entire Garden and adjacent playground and tennis court occupy six of the park's twelve acres.

Kevin Mitchell, Park Superintendent, who is in charge of overseeing the entire building project, continues to design, plant, and maintain these beautiful gardens. The Parks and Recreation Department staff installed the gazebo, many of the plants, and built a bridge across the creek that runs through the Garden. The City's landscape crew put in many long

hours keeping it all in top condition.

### Future Plans

Future plans include building a fence along Ball Street to provide definition, installing a fountain, building two more bridges across the creek, installing soft walking paths on the east side of the creek and landscaping the east side, where plants will be more of the "native" type. Plans also call for building a pavilion next to the Bessie Mitchell Meeting Facility, which would be used for a variety of functions, including educating people about the environment.

### Special Features of the Garden

- The gray benches are made with recycled plastic and wood fiber mix that, unlike all wood, will not warp.
- A 5,000-gallon water pond is stocked with fish and aquatic plants and includes a small waterfall and a footbridge.
- The Grapevine Garden Club has planted a memorial garden dedicated to those lives lost in the tragedies affecting our nation over the years. White flowering trees and a commemorative plaque may be viewed on this sitting knoll located near the Meeting Facility building. The Grapevine Garden Club donated the bench located there to the City.
- The Gary Price statue, *New Season*, located near the gazebo, honors the wild visitors to the Garden.
- One of the highlights of Heritage Park is a 200-year-old Bur oak, which is on the east side of the park. It has been around since the Revolutionary War!
- The Garden contains a gazebo, where weddings and other ceremonies may be held, a lighted wood stage and sitting walls where visitors may rest.
- Free docent tours of the Garden may be arranged through Kevin Mitchell, Park Supervisor.
- Literature is available for self-guided tours.

### Ponds and Waterscape

The Botanical Garden at Heritage Park contains three water features. The main display pond is a 5,000-gallon water feature. The pond was constructed out of granite with reinforced steel. The pond contains domestic koi, imported koi, and four varieties of goldfish, including shubunkin, fantails, calico fantails, and comets. Many different plants are also growing in the pond: hardy water lilies, tropical water lilies, lotus, arrow arum, bog lily, dwarf cattail, floating heart, iris, dwarf papyrus, parrots feather, rush, sweetflag, taro, red stemmed thalia and water sprite. The main pond is a great example of man recreating a mini ecosystem.

The second pond is located in the secluded seating area in the azalea garden. This pond is a 1,200-gallon water feature with a rubber liner. Aquascape Inc. constructed the pond during a build-a-pond day. This pond also features fish and plants. This is a more natural water feature compared to the more formal pond described above.

In 2003, the two water areas were blended together with the addition of a larger, formal water feature and another pond between the previous two ponds.

### Butterfly Garden — east side of Mitchell House

- Nectar plants for butterflies are the butterfly bush, lantana, butterfly weed, purple coneflower, and rudbeckia.
- Larvae plants are parsley, dill, rue, fennel, and milkweed. Caterpillars of the Black Swallowtail (parsley, fennel, rue), and Monarch (milkweed) may be seen through the summer months until October. Gulf Fritillary butterflies lay their eggs on the passion vine along the ramp area.

### Bird Sanctuary—southeast side of Garden— Several feeders on east side of creek

- Blue jays, tufted titmouse, chickadees, hairy woodpeckers, cardinals and sparrows may be found at these feeders.

- Insect-eating birds such as robins, mockingbirds, bluebirds, and wrens are found throughout the Garden.
- Yaupon hollies, cherry laurels, nandinas and roses provide berries and fruit, which will be eaten by cardinals, cedar waxwings, thrushes, titmouse, bluebirds and sparrows.
- Hummingbirds will visit the columbine, lily, salvia, lantana, verbena, flowering quince, hibiscus and butterfly bush.

The Grapevine Botanical Garden is TCMGA Project #323. For information about volunteering, contact Project Chair **Rachel Clark** at 817-488-0035.

I used to visit and revisit it  
a dozen times a day,  
and stand in deep contemplation over  
my vegetable progeny  
with a love that nobody  
could share or conceive  
of who had never taken  
part in the process of creation.  
It was one of the most bewitching  
sights in the world to observe  
a hill of beans thrusting aside the soil,  
or a row of early peas  
just peeping forth sufficiently to trace a  
line of delicate green.

- Nathaniel Hawthorne,  
*Mosses from an Old Manse*

## Blue-Blooming Vitex and Plumbago: Butterflies Love ‘Em, Deer Don’t

By **Dr. Jerry Parsons**  
Extension Horticulturist

For indigo blossoms, butterfly habitat and deer resistance, few plants beat Vitex and Plumbago, two adapted bloomers recently added to the Texas Superstar plant program.

Started in 1989, the Texas A&M University Texas Superstar program applies Aggie horticulture smarts to some of our best-known plants. They have been developed and cultured to be even more desirable, marketable and successful for Texas gardens. When you see the Texas Superstar tag, you know the plant’s a good bet.

This summer Plumbago and Vitex join this elite group. They’re getting their own “star” on the Lone Star state’s “plant walk of fame”.

Plumbago is a tender perennial with profuse blue flowers. It loves the heat, doesn’t mind our long, humid summers, and is reasonably drought tolerant. A white-blooming version is less prolific, while blue Plumbago produces flowers non-stop from summer until frost. Disease-, pest- and deer-resistant, Plumbago is also known as Skyflower because of the sky-blue color of its flowers. It blooms even in considerable shade. While it is native to South Africa, it’s well adapted to South Texas conditions and will keep your yard full of butterflies all summer. Plumbago responds well to pruning. It will flower profusely if you cut it back after a growth-flush, since it bears flowers on new wood.

Vitex, our other Superstar, is also known as Texas Lilac or the Chaste tree. A native of China and India, it actually naturalized throughout North America as early as 1670. For people living in the warmer parts of the South, the “Lilac Chaste Tree” has been the shrub of choice to mimic beloved lilacs that are restricted to cooler regions. It grows best in full sun and in a location that drains well. Vitex

loves the heat, and is so tough that even the Texas Department of Transportation plants it in highway medians. Vitex is a spectacular butterfly-attracting plant, hummingbirds love it, and it’s deer-resistant, although bucks will brush their antlers on its branches if the plant is allowed to grow large.

So, you’re probably wondering, what’s not to like about Vitex and why isn’t it planted in every yard in town? That’s where the Superstar horticulturists step in. The old Vitex had small spikes of flowers that were pale lilac, mauve, off-white or light pink. The blooms were small and unimpressive. Horticulturists now have identified and tested improved varieties such as ‘Montrose Purple’, ‘LeCompte’ and ‘Shoal Creek’ that have 8- to 12-inch long spikes. These varieties will all be marketed under the name ‘Texas Lilac’ Vitex.

The bloom spikes on these improved varieties are not only large and beautiful, they’re also fragrant and provide long-lasting cut flowers. But—once the bloom spikes have provided several weeks of beauty, black and dark-brown seeds result. Not only do these seeds prevent additional bloom spikes, they may, in some regions, produce a mutant seedling population what will not be as glamorous as the parent plants.

What to do? Deadhead, of course. If you want to enjoy the full monty of these spectacular blossoms, you must prune the spent blooms. Diligently. The challenge is that Vitex is extremely fast growing. It can grow into a small tree if not cut to the ground yearly.

The seed pods of ‘Texas Lilac’ Vitex must be removed after *every* bloom cycle—it will be blooming again in less than a month. The entire plant should be cut back to the ground *every* winter. If you live in an area with a large deer population, the deer will “prune” the Vitex plant back to the ground for you as they rub their antlers on the branches. Or, it will certainly be a reminder that you’ll need to cut back the ravaged stems.

For those who seek a Superstar medicinal



plant, Vitex fills the bill. *Vitex agnus castus* belonged in the official group of medicinal plants of antiquity, and is mentioned in the works of Hippocrates, Dioscorides and Theophrast.

Other fun facts about Vitex and Plumbago:

Children often make “earrings” with sticky Plumbago flowers—letting them stick to their earlobes. The Plumbago bloom produces sticky gland-tipped hairs on the flower calyx. The seed capsule retains the stickiness which presumably helps disperse the seed by attaching to animals. The top of the capsule splits opens and drops the seed out.

Plumbago traditionally is used to treat warts, broken bones and wounds. It’s also taken as snuff for headaches and as an emetic to dispel bad dreams.

Vitex can be found in the writings of Hippocrates from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. He recommended the plant for injuries, inflammation and swelling of the spleen. He also recommended using the leaves in wine to stop hemorrhages and the “passing of afterbirth”. Vitex also has astringent properties, and has been recommended for wild animal bites, swelling of the spleen and for dropsy.

The English name for *Vitex agnus castus*, ‘chaste tree’, is derived from the belief that the plant would suppress libido in women. In Greek cities, festivals in the honor of Demeter included a vow of chastity by the local women.

In Europe, the Catholic Church developed a variation on this theme by placing Vitex blossoms at the clothing of novice monks to supposedly suppress their libido. The common name ‘Monk’s Pepper’ refers to the medieval belief that utilizing potions made from the berries helped monks maintain their vows of chastity. There is nothing in contemporary scientific literature to suggest that it actually does suppress the libido.

For images and further information on

Plumbago, see:

[http://www.plantanswers.com/plumbago\\_best.htm](http://www.plantanswers.com/plumbago_best.htm)

For images and further information on Vitex, see:

<http://www.plantanswers.com/vitex.htm>

What is one to say about June,  
the time of perfect young summer,  
the fulfillment of the promise  
of the earlier months,  
and with as yet  
no sign to remind one  
that its fresh young beauty  
will ever fade.

- Gertrude Jekyll, *On Gardening*

In June, as many as a dozen species may  
burst their buds on a single day.  
No man can heed all of these anniversaries;  
no man can ignore all of them.

- Aldo Leopold

With a few flowers in my garden, half a  
dozen pictures  
and some books, I live without envy.

- Lope de Vega

If you have a garden and a library, you have  
everything you need.

- Cicero

**Tarrant County Master Gardener Association**  
401 East Eighth Street



### Calendar of Upcoming Events

June 2	TCMGA Monthly Meeting - Delaney Vineyard
June/July	FWBG Concerts in the Garden 6/3-5, 6/9-12, 6/17-19, 6/24-26, 7/1-4 from 8-10 p.m.
June 24	2005 Crape Myrtle Conference in McKinney
June 25	Texas Smartscape Seminar at UTA
July 24-27	International Master Gardener Conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
Sept 20 thru Nov 15	Fall 2005 MG Intern Class
Sept 30	Little Hands on the Farm begins at the State Fair
Oct	Annual Landscape Design School (10/11, 13, 18, 20, 29)

Intern Field Trips (open to all MGs):

June 9 – Teen Challenge, Union Gospel Mission, Veterans Park Wildscape

For up-to-the-minute TCMGA news visit: [www.tcmga.org](http://www.tcmga.org)  
More state news: [www.texasmastergardeners.com](http://www.texasmastergardeners.com)