

Tarrant County Master Gardeners



BUSINESS NAME

Volume 2, Issue 2

February 2018

Thistle Hill

A note from the editor: Thistle Hill is a Fort Worth mansion from the “cattle baron” era. It was built in 1903 for Electra Waggoner, the daughter of a cattleman. It is listed on the National Register, sits on 6.5 acres and has been a MG project since 1995.

By project chair Keith Olmsted

The year 2017 saw major changes with the overall landscape at TH, starting with the removal of all the aged hackberry trees on the east and south wall. This was a project I took on in conjunction with a tree guy I have used at my home on several occasions and required a lot of time on the weekends in January and February 2017. We also had to remove a beautiful pecan some 50' tall on the south side of the property. These trees all had to be removed because of the damage that was being done to the 8' brick fence that goes around TH. This turned out to be a 2.5 month project by the time we got the stumps ground up and all the wood removed from the back yard. By the way, we made planters out of some of the cuttings and planted them with succulents. These were sold at our monthly meeting last year that gave us a little extra money for planting our many pots at TH.

After the tree project, I worked with Jerre Tracey, the executive director for Fort Worth Historical, and Sue Weston, of Weston Gardens in FW, to design a more updated tree and plant list to begin our goal of re-

landscaping TH with better varieties of trees and plants. The architect landscape plan was provided free by Sue Weston of Weston Gardens. We are hoping some money is allocated toward the new trees to be planted in the front part of the property early in 2018. In the new plan, we are going to reintroduce some fruit trees in the area that had a small orchard in the back yard with a better variety of fruit trees than were once there. This is a long term project as money allows but all are committed to transform the beauty of the existing property into an even more beautiful setting that takes you back in time when one walks thru the gates of TH.

Our educational efforts at TH are a continued objective as we have drafted a letter to schools inviting them to tour TH. I have led two large groups touring TH this past year with occasional small groups that wander in to see the property. I have also done some composting demos in the past to our new and regular Master Gardeners.

In 2016, I approached Silver-

creek Materials about sponsoring Ft Worth Historical with free quality soil mix and native mulch, as it is needed at both TH and the McFarland House on Penn Street, which is where the Historical FW offices are and all the records and archives are stored. This has been a great asset receiving free materials that gives us more of our budget to add more flowers and plants as we go through the year. Continued on next page.



Keith Olmsted hard at work.

Tarrant County Master Gardeners

Thistle Hill continued

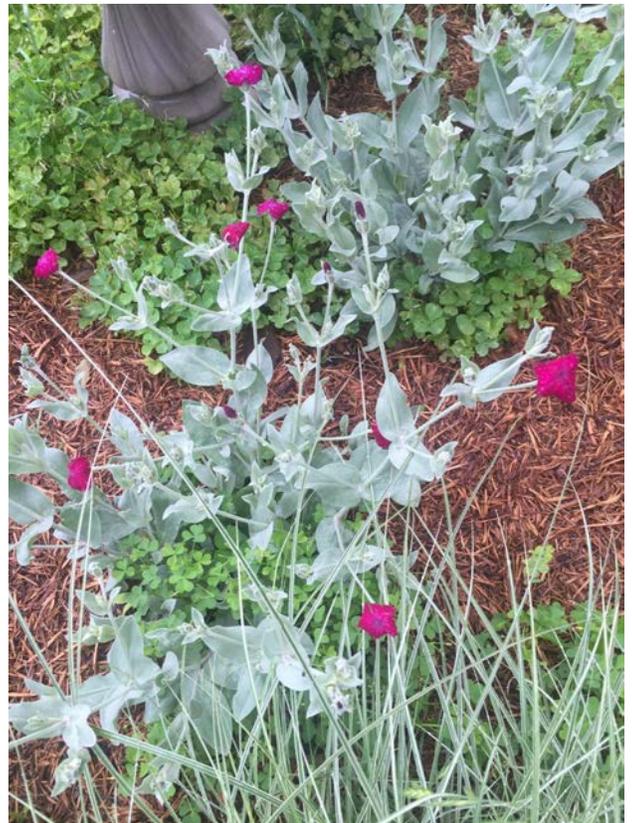
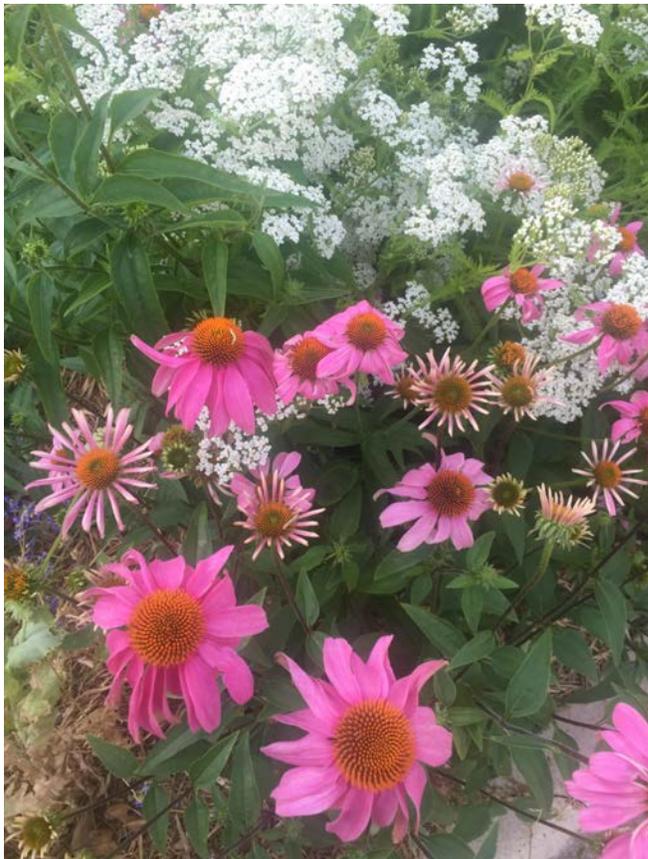
There is never a dull week with something always going on at TH. For example, Ft Worth Historical had a pumpkin patch fun raiser this year in October, a fun run in January and on-going events such as private parties and weddings. We had two very special events in the past year and a half. First, the History Channel did a special on TH and were out three times filming. Then,

Robert Redford filmed at TH for a movie coming out this year. They film a scene with a young boy coming out of a second story window that will be in the movie. They also filmed downtown Ft Worth. The story is about a bank robber, so stay tuned.

I am fortunate to have such a great group of Master Gardeners that come out on a weekly basis to help maintain this Ft Worth treasure.

It's a pleasure to work with them in the effort of keeping TH beautiful for tourists and locals to enjoy.

The photos on this page were taken by Gus Guthrie, and show volunteers hard at work smashing pumpkins, and some of the lovely plants at Thistle Hill.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners

February Garden Guidelines by Keith C. Hansen

This article is by Keith C. Hansen, Extension Horticulturist, Smith County, Tyler TX.

It is an archive article from the Tarrant County Newsletter February 2013 edition.

Thanks to Theresa Thomas for pulling it.

The new gardening year really gets in full swing in February with many activities and options for growing and learning. Keep in mind that the average last freeze for the Northeast Texas area is not until mid-March. Even so, many plants normally begin to show signs of growth in February. Narcissus and daffodil foliage is already up and growing, and blooms are not far behind. Wild plum is beginning to bloom, along with deciduous magnolias, quince and bridal wreath spirea.

PRUNING:

February is a good time to prune. Before buds begin to swell for spring, finish pruning summer flowering trees and shrubs. Do not prune spring flowering plants such as spirea (bridal wreath), azalea, forsythia or quince until after they bloom. Most plants, if properly selected for their allotted space, need very little pruning. Ornamental

plants should be appreciated for their natural forms and usually look better and are easier to care for if heavy pruning is avoided.

Finish pruning peach and plum trees early this month. These fruit trees are not pruned for looks but for better harvests and easier picking. Pruning regulates tree height and stimulates new growth for next year's crop.

Prune hybrid tea roses in February to induce new growth and spring blooms. Remove top growth 18 to 24 inches above ground, retaining several healthy canes.

The older the plant, the more canes you should leave. Make clean, sharp cuts just above buds which point outward. Postpone pruning of climbing roses if necessary until after their major flush of spring bloom. Many antique roses should not be as drastically pruned as hybrid teas.

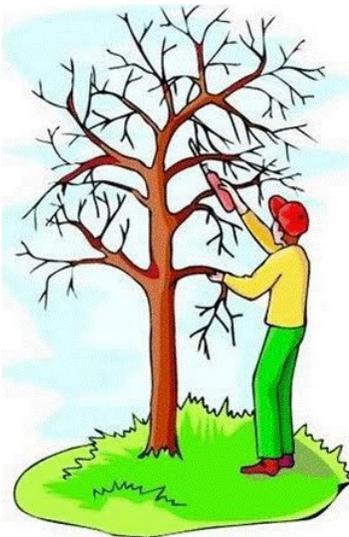
If those seed heads on crepe myrtles bother you, you can remove them this month. Just

clip back the ends of the branches, but do not destroy the beauty of the gracefully sculptured trunks by severe pruning. Heavy pruning is not necessary for abundant blooms.

PLANTING:

This is a great time for visiting your local nursery. New plants are arriving now for late winter and early spring planting. By planting early, plants will be off to a better start and can become adjusted before the stresses of summer arrive (remember last summer).

February is time to plant several types of plants including roses, bare-rooted fruit and nut trees, along with grape, blueberry and blackberry. Many fruit trees require higher levels of pruning, fertilization and pest control. Find out the requirements of the types you are interested in because some require more work than others. Some fruit trees requiring less pest management include fig, blackberry, blueberry, Japanese persimmon, and pear.



February Garden Guidelines continued

When purchasing fruit trees, know which types require a second variety for pollination, such as plum, apple, pear, blueberries and some Muscatine grapes. Always plant in full sun. February is the month to apply fertilizer to peach and plum trees. Apply 1 pound (2 cups) of ammonium sulfate (21-0-0) per inch of trunk diameter for established peach trees at and slightly beyond the edge of the tree canopy, never against the trunk.

It's time to select and plant gladiolus bulbs for summer blooms. Canas, daylilies, ornamental grasses and mums may be divided once new foliage appears in early spring. It's

also time for planting ground covers and planting cool season annuals such as calendula, hollyhocks and nasturtium.

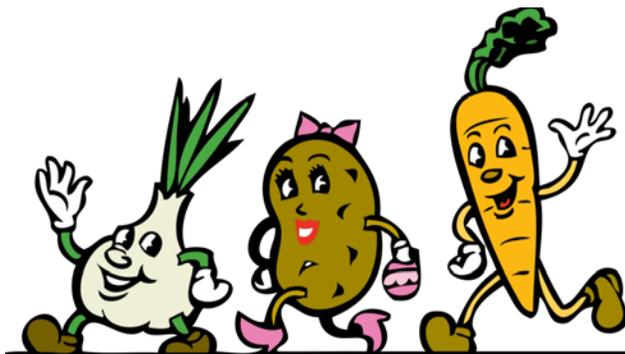
LAWNS

Early to mid-February marks the time to apply a pre-emergence herbicide for lawns that had a summer weed problem last year.

These products kill germinating seed. The mild weather may already be triggering weed germination. A second application may be needed in late May or early June. Remember that the best defense against lawn weeds is a healthy, thick turf resulting from good management. Don't rely on chemicals alone!

VEGETABLES

Early to mid-February is vegetable planting time for cool season crops including onions, Irish potatoes, radishes, greens, spinach, sugar snap peas, carrots, broccoli, beets and turnips. Early planting assures a good harvest prior to summer heat. But, don't be in a hurry to plant summer vegetables such as tomato, peppers, squash, etc. A late frost or freeze will result in repeated plantings. Summer vegetables require warm days and warm soils to quickly establish.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners

Flower of the Month for March

Golden Groundsel, *Packera obovata*,. Asteraceae (Aster Family)

This lovely perennial groundcover forms a rosette of oval leaves and blooms in late February and into early Spring.

It can colonize a large area and can make a lovely ground cover. It prefers moist shade or semi-shade remaining green most of the year.

The bloom stalk is about twelve inches tall topped with a cluster of yellow daisy like flowers that announce the arrival of Spring and provide early nectar for bees and butterflies.

Propagation by seed is rather slow but the little rosettes spread by runners and are very easy to transplant.

This is a very charming plant that deserves a special place in the landscape.

by Josephine Keeney



The above special on Golden Groundsel is courtesy of Josephine Keeney, Cross Timbers Master Naturalist and Plant Sale Co-Chairperson of the Native Plant Society of Texas-North Central Chapter.

Newsletter Editor Lorie Grandclair-Diaz would like to thank Theresa Thomas for agreeing to help with Newsletter content every month and step in as co-chair.

Tuck's Stuf

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State Awards

Ever wonder where all those plaques on the office walls come from or how we got them in the first place? Ah! First place, that is the magic phrase for the project of preparing the applications for these awards.

The State Master Gardener Association during its annual meeting announces the winners for the applications for the awards. Each county may enter one or all of the 8 different award categories.

But let us begin with explaining that all of the 85 plus member counties do not compete against each other. We are divided into different categories based upon our size. There are Master Gardener groups as small as under 25 members. Tarrant is considered Extra Large because we have over 200 members. This means that we compete with Dallas, Bexar (San Antonio), Harris (Houston), Montgomery (the first Texas MG Association) and Galveston.

It was determined several years ago that fairer judging would occur if done by Agents,

like our Steve, from out of the state of Texas. An interesting thing that has occurred as a result of this type of judging is that Steve will get calls from some of these other Agents wanting to know more about these projects. These out of state contacts are done by Jayla Fry, the MG Coordinator at A&M. There is, of course, a State Awards Committee who reviews all of the submissions to verify that the rules have been followed and are eligible to proceed to the judges.

The rules include everything from size of font to number of words and number of pages. The "purpose of each award is to recognize outstanding MG people, associations, projects and programs throughout the state of Texas for their outstanding contributions within the state." And then there are 9 more requirements with emphasis on collaboration with other agencies, involving and teaching children, teaching

programs while utilizing research-based information and demonstrating innovative programs with creative and new approaches--to name a few.

Awards categories:

Youth—a program that coordinates JMG activities and service learning projects

Project---a project at a physical location displaying best hort practices for education

Educational Program---an educational program to provide info on horticultural topic and may be a workshop or presentations

Written Education---any form of printed material created/written by MG as a tool for horticultural related education---newsletters, pamphlets, calendars and mass media

Research---a project with applied scientific methodology conducted by MGs and overseen by AgriLife Staff but written by MGs

Tuck's Stuff continued.



Marva E. Beck JMG Leader of the Year—an adult who demonstrates effective leadership in support of JMG programs in his/her MG Association. May be either a Master Gardener or an AgriLife employee. Only one of these is awarded each year and not for each size of award group. It is a recognition of Mrs. Marva Beck who has been so supportive and instrumental in promoting the JMG program since its origin. And she is a great lady!

Outstanding Individual---an MG in good standing whose involvement and contributions during the award year are of importance to the associa-

tion and community Association---recognizes an association that has completed one or more programs/projects of importance to the community, must involve 2 or more MGs and may be ongoing projects

Back to where we started: so many plaques indicating significant wins over several years. This indicates a lot of creative work and accomplishments by a group of persons dedicated to do the job: YOU. Just the bringing together of an extremely diverse group and agreeing upon items is a phenomenon. But let us not overlook the tremendously positive support of our Agent

Steve Chaney—thank you, Steve and thanks to each of you Master Gardeners.

The entire Awards Handbook is available on the txmg.org website . If you have never visited this website: do so! It is a wealth of information available to each of us and the password is sunset

Get involved, Folks, couldn't be a better use of your time, ET

(also known as Eleanor Tuck, aka, the Sheriff)

2018 TCMG Caladium Sale

It's time for caladium sales! You can order your caladium selection at the February and March meetings, or send your order form and check to Donna Detzel. Please order early as

availability may be limited due to growers conditions. This year we have added 3 new varieties: Aaron, Gingerland and White Wing. Order forms and flyers can be found in your weekly

eblast. Please make checks payable to TCMGA.

Sue Kelley



Dave Wilson wins the Master Gardener Rock Award

Each year the Awards Committee recognizes an outstanding Master Gardener whose efforts often go unnoticed. They work behind as well as in front of the scene – and there are many of you who exactly fit that description!

After some “serious” investigation, the 2017 ROCK award goes to Dave Wilson.

Dave is one of those “behind the scenes” guys. By definition that is discreet, out of the public eye, low key. Doesn’t that exactly describe Dave!

He can be seen at every MG meeting - manning the plant exchange table. He also brings ice to every meeting (I’ll bet you didn’t know that!) Dave has also been one of the barbeque cooks each year. He has helped for years with the fertilizer sale, taught tool sharpening and there are many other things that this “behind the scenes” guy accomplishes.

He has been described as one of those people who will do anything he can to help – if he cannot do it, he will get someone who can. He’s always willing to lend a hand. He is likewise active in his church and “takes care” of all the mechanical issues there.

One of Dave’s friends also remarked that he remembers that when Dave had hair, it was red!

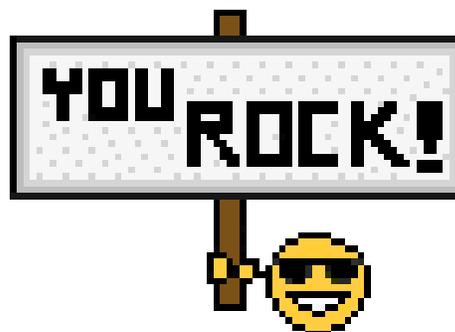
What an outstanding guy! Congratulations to Dave Wilson! And thank you for all you do!

Let’s all give Dave a big hand!

By Claudia Teague



Above, Dave Wilson hefting his Rock Award.
Photo by Lena Goff.



Propagation Specialist Training Accepting Registration

Registration for the popular plant propagation specialist course, offered by the Tarrant County Master Gardener Association, is now open. The full, two-day course, March 23-24, in Fort Worth offers hands-on learning of a variety of propagation techniques. You will come away with starter plants, propagation equipment and thumb drive with resource materials. The \$225 fee includes one dinner, two lunches and snacks.

Topics include: Seed propagation, grafting, air layering, root cutting, bulb chipping, cactus and succulents, stem cutting, off sets, simple layering, leaf cuttings and spores.

Propagation experts and specialists teach the course. Registration is limited to two MGs per county. The registration form, schedule and hotel information are available on the Texas Master Garden website, www.txmg.org. Click

on the Specialist Training link on the right side of the home page and then choose Specialist Training Offerings. Deadline to register for the propagation course is February 26, 2018.



From the President's Corner

I can't believe it's February already, time really flies. I hope all of you are staying warm, free from the flu and enjoying life.

The new directory will have some new names on the Executive Board and on our committees. If you are interested in helping on a committee, please contact the chair, we always need eager volunteers.

Speaking of volunteers, thank you for turning in your hours. This year we had 14 months because of the changes with the Volunteer Management System. We hope, if you didn't get your hours turned in, you will please do it now.

These are the figures for 2017.

46,843.45 volunteer 4,303.5 CEU'S Total 51,146.95 hrs.

Miles driven 395,198

\$1,130,800 total value of all hours \$55,328 value of miles

\$1,234,687 total of values above. I am expecting big things this year. Please take time to turn in your hours and make me right!!!

Congratulations the our 2017 Blue Badges!

The Spring Interns and the Mod Squad graduated in January. We are so very proud to welcome our new Blue Badges. Also, congratulations to your Co-Chairs and Advisors. All of these master gardeners have put in many hours and have done a lot of hard work. Well done folks.

Continued on next page.

Tarrant County Master Gardeners

From the President's Corner continued



Date/Time
Event
02/08/2018-02/09/2018
9:00 am-4:00 pm
Specialist Training -
Plant Health and Diag-
nostics Educator
PACE Building, Gon-
zales Texas
02/09/2018-02/10/2018
11:30 am-1:00 pm
Smith County - Master
Gardeners at the Li-
brary
Tyler Public Library,
Tyler TX
02/12/2018
12:00 am
Victoria County -
Lunch and Learn with
the Masters
Pattie Dodson Health
Center, Victoria Texas/
Victoria
02/14/2018-02/16/2018
1:00 pm-12:30 pm
Specialist Training:
Vegetables
Dallas Co. Texas A&M
AgriLife Extensive Ser-
vice, Dallas TX
02/19/2018-02/20/2018
8:00 am-4:45 pm
Specialist Training -
Earth-Kind® Land-

scaping
McKinney Roughs Na-
ture Park, Cedar Creek
Texas
02/20/2018
5:30 pm-6:30 pm
Henderson County -
Growing a Cutting
Garden
Clint W. Murchison
Memorial Library,
Athens TX

State Master Gar-
dener's Confer-
ence April 4-6,2018
Texas A & M, College
Station.
Hope to see you there
and I hope to see you at
our MG Monthly Meet-
ing February 1st.

Remember February
14th, trim your roses, if
you still have some and
hug that special person
in your life.
Hugs,
Judy Ratzlaff
President



Important February Dates:

Monthly Meeting Thursday, February 1

Advisory & Executive Committee meeting Thursday, February 15 @
BRIT

Tarrant County offices closed Monday, February 19 for President's
Day

Tarrant County Master Gardeners

MG's Put the Garden in the Home and Garden Show!

Volunteers are needed for the Fort Worth Home and Garden Show, Feb. 16-18 at Will Rogers Memorial Center. This is a fun way to get hours and help people who want to know more about gardening.

Shift hours are: Friday, Feb. 16, 2-4:30 p.m. and 4:30 – 7 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 17, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.-7 p.m.; and Sunday, Feb. 18, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 2 – 5 p.m. Will also need helpers for move-in day which will be either Wednesday or Thursday (Feb. 14-15). There will be a seed propagation workshop on Saturday at 3 and Sunday at 2:30. A workshop on goards and luffa goard soap will be at 1 p.m. on Saturday and 12:30 on Sunday. Helpers will be heeded.

Volunteers who carpool (at least two people) will have their \$10 parking fee reimbursed. Contact Patsy Miller to volunteer. Give day and shift you wish to volunteer.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners

CALLING ALL COOKS.....

We're excited to report that Ways and Means has begun work on a Master Gardener cookbook! Rocky Deutscher, as chair, and her committee have made some initial plans for the book. But, we need each of you to share your favorite recipe or recipes!

The committee anticipates this project will take some months – collecting the recipes, cooking and tasting. The plan also includes having a couple Master Gardener meetings with themes, e.g., salads, soups, etc. where the dish and the recipe can be shared.

So, get out that recipe box, book, drawer or wherever you stash those favorites and send them to the following:

Appetizers, Beverages and Sauces:

Peggy Crist

Michele Elekes

Soups and Salads:

Ginny Schmidt

_Mercy Kettler

Main Dishes:

Susan Houston

_Rocky Deutscher

_Judy Ratzlaff

Vegetables and Side Dishes:

Lena Goff

Dorothy Hildebrand

Breads and Rolls:

Lena Goff



Cakes, Pies and Miscellaneous Desserts:

Debbie Rosenthal

Camille Eckersley

Cookies and Candies:

Sue Kelley

Betty Story

Canning, Preserving and Home Treatments:

Dorothy Hildebrand

Ginny Schmidt

This and That:

Rocky Deutscher

Please include your name, email address and phone number with your recipe submission. Any special comments may be added as well – gluten free, vegan – and “this was my grandmother’s favorite.”

If it’s more convenient for you, there will be a box at the February Master Gardener meeting to drop off your recipes. This will be wonderful – only if all of us get involved!

Sue Kelley

