

# THE LATEST DIRT

McLennan County Master Gardener Association  
Volume XI Issue 5

May 2009

## President's Letter

April is one of the twelve busiest months of the year. Each day I seem to have more to do than the day after yesterday. Things to do, places to go, people to see, and not enough time to accomplish them all. Ernie sums it up- "To do all I would like to do, I need at least two more lifetimes." I am sure many of you experience the same dilemma. As I contemplate this issue and see time management as the problem, I realize that this predicament is mostly my own fault. However there are factors that contribute to the jam packed days.

*I see more now.* Driving along FM 308 I notice the pecan trees bursting out with light green leaves, one of the last trees to break dormancy. I have seen them before but now I see the precursor to the summer season and feel a sense of urgency to beat the heat. Further along a Scissor-tail Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*) sits on a cedar fence post, but only for a moment as it blasts upward, retrieves an unsuspecting insect, and then settles back down while ingesting its prey. The sight of a Scissor-tail means it is time to plant cotton or okra and any other plants that like temperatures into the nineties. The highway medians are now flowing with all kinds of plants reaching high to present their glory. In the past I saw only weeds that battled with my corn, cotton, wheat, and Coastal Bermuda. A Bible verse comes to mind: Matthew 6, 28-30- "Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the

furnace, will He not much more do so for you." Surely I have spent too much time toiling and not enough time observing.

*I know more now.* Much of what I understand today has come from lessons learned. Experience is a great teacher, but the successes and failures of others afford excellent opportunities to increase wisdom and knowledge. The Master Gardeners and the AgriLife Extension Service offers countless opportunities to gain information. With knowledge however comes a responsibility to develop areas in which you yourself lack and to extend to others the benefits of maintaining a balance with the earth around us.

*I am older now.* Yep, while my mind wants me to do more my body urges me to do less. I anticipate that eventually my mind and body will reconcile the disparity, but until that time I plan on experiencing creation to the extent life and time are allotted to me.

If the number of days of your past add up to more than the apparent number of the days of your future then you likely relate well to my thoughts penned herein. If not, then you probably flew right by and never noticed the redundant detail within each of the first two sentences of this letter. Nevertheless, whatever stage of life you are in, "Don't forget to smell the roses."

-Steven Lovecky

## McLennan County Master Gardener Association Officers 2009

President- Steven Lovecky Vice President- Jan Serface Secretary- Nelda Cooper  
Treasurer- Louie McDaniel Sponsor- Shane McLellan Newsletter- James Storrs  
Send volunteer hours to Julia Khoury at 8512 Bosque, Waco 76712, or tkhoury@hotmail.com  
[www.mclennanmastergardeners.org](http://www.mclennanmastergardeners.org)

### Volunteer Opportunities & Events for May/June

May 4, 8:00.....TSTC Rose Garden  
May 5, 9:00.....Work morning Cedar Ridge  
May 26, 9:00.....Work morning Cedar Ridge  
May 20, 9:00.....Superstar Bed...(deadheading, etc.)  
May 9, (TTBA)....Docent Tour with CBA Board  
May 9, 3:00.....Pre Plant Sale/Hamburgers at James Bays  
May 15, 9:00.....Load plants for plant sale at James's house  
May 15.....WWE (tentative day in the veggie bed)  
May 16, 9-3:00...MCMG Plant Sale (set up 7:30-9:00 a.m.)  
May 28.....MCMG Trip to A&M  
  
June 4.....Dedication of Trailside Gardens at Carleen Bright Arboretum

#### **Stay tuned!**

The newly named Trailside Gardens at the Carleen Bright Arboretum will be planted after completion of the irrigation system and weed removal.

Plants are being selected and will be planted soon at the McGregor Demonstration Garden, after weed removal. Jene hopes to do a last spraying for weeds next week, weather permitting.

-Jeanette Kelly

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### **Pre-Plant Sale Sale**

Unless you've been on the moon the past few months, you know that the annual plant sale is coming up. James Bays' yearly pre-sale sale will be on May 9 at 3:00. This gives us the opportunity to shop early before everything goes to the MCMG plant sale May 16. This year James has invited us all for his famous hamburgers after the sale. You do not have to purchase a plant to come. Families are welcome. **Please RSVP to Barbara Mersinger (Plant Sale Chairman), 751-7459 as soon as possible.**

## **Reminders about May 16 Plant Sale**

I plan to arrive at 7:30 AM. Please bring your plants between 7:30-8:30. Everything needs to be in place by opening time at 9:00 AM, and many people come early. Everyone is encouraged to bring as many large plants as possible- they sell better. All pots should be clean, free of fire ants and insects, and labeled. If you have a flat of plants, a label on the flat is fine. If you don't know the cultivar name, the "family" name is better than none. Bring a chair, and wear your name badge or some sort of ID showing that you are a MCMG or Intern. Only the cashiers will take money and make change. Please price items at an even dollar amount, or at least dollars and half-dollars. The sale will end at 3:00 PM. The sale is at 4605 West Waco Drive.

-Barbara Mersinger

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## **May Meeting**

The May meeting will be at the arboretum at 12 noon on Wednesday the 13th. There will be no program this month. The trip to A&M on May 28 will take the place of a program. Get your reservation in as early as possible!

## **Membership Update**

Andrea Moore's address is now 1329 Windstone, Waco 76712.  
Phone 254-845-4379. E-mail addresses are still the same.

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## **Report on TEXAS MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE, Marshall, April 24**

The McLennan Co. Master Gardeners received a plaque for our entry in the awards Project Category for the Children's Garden Fair which we conducted in October. Our entry tied with another county for second place in the medium sized organization group. Ila Jean accepted the award for our group. There will be pictures on the Texas Master Gardener website of all the winners.

Also specialist certificates were awarded to Jeanette Kelly for JMG specialist, Louie McDaniel for Greenhouse specialist, Carol Wood and Ila Jean Carothers for Vegetable specialists at the awards banquet.

Attending were Doug Quicksall, current TMG president and his wife, Susan; Robin Urbanovsky, Nelda Cooper, Anita Dawson and her husband, Jerry, and Ila Jean Carothers and her husband, Jon.

Next year's conference will be at the Omni Mandalay Hotel in Las Colinas in April.

## Minutes- April 2009 Meeting

April 8, 2009

The McLennan Co. Master Gardener meeting was called to order on April 8, 2009 at 6 PM at the home of Dawn Segrest by Vice- President Jan Serface. The minutes for the March meeting were approved as written in the newsletter.

### TREASURERS' REPORT:

The report was given by treasurer, Louie McDaniel. The ending balance as of March 31, 2009 was \$10,368.65. The treasurer's report was approved as given.

### BUSINESS:

Congratulations to James Storrs on the completion of his education and volunteer hours. Changes to the by-laws were approved as written.

### PROJECTS & COMMITTEES:

County government week recognition will be May 19, 2009 at the McLennan County Court House. Master gardeners will provide cookies for the reception. Gerry Milner is the co-coordinator.

The Arboretum Trail Garden dedication will be June 4, 2009.

The docent training on April 1 and practice tours on April 8 at the arboretum were a success.

The pond has been cleaned and the Superstar beds are growing beautifully.

A Cedar Ridge Elem. workday will be Thursday, April 16 at 9 am.

The Cedar Ridge "Day in the Garden" is scheduled for Friday, April 17 from 8:30-3:00. Volunteers are needed. Contact Sandy Back.

The next workday for the Earth-Kind demonstration bed at TSTC will be Monday, May 4 at 9 am.

Habitat for Humanity - One planting was done on March 18 and there were two dedications, one on March 14 & one on April 2.

The McGregor Demonstration Garden planting will begin soon. Contact Jo Ann Clafferty to donate plants. A plant list has been sent to all members by email.

Two plantings are scheduled at Woodway Elementary. One on April 23 from 1:15-2:15 and one on April 24 from 8:45-12:30. Contact Kim Dougherty. Beasts & Blooms is April 18-19 at the Waco zoo.

Master Gardeners will be doing gardening activities with the children.

The Gardener's Gathering at the Arboretum is April 26. Contact Jeanette Kelly.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Flyers were given out to advertise the plant sale on May 16, 2009.

A plant presale & hamburger cook-out is scheduled for May 9 at 3 pm at James Bays' home.

The Master Gardener's Plant Sale is May 16 from 9-3. Set-up will begin by 7 am. Helpers are needed to load plants at James Bays' on May 15 at 9 am.

The master gardener's will take a field trip to Texas A&M on May 28. We will be going by bus.

Della Setser is the chairperson for the new Master Gardener T-shirts.

The state MG Convention is April 23-25 in Marshall. Subscriptions to the TX Gardener magazine are \$21.95-1 yr., \$37.95-2 yrs., \$47.95-3 yrs. Contact Ila Jean Carothers.

Ila Jean Carothers and Barbara Vance attended a reception at TSTC. The McLennan Co. MG were presented with a plaque in recognition of our donation to students in the horticulture department. The meeting was adjourned.

### PROGRAM:

A photograph presentation from a trip to the Northwest United States by Dawn Segrest.

The next meeting will be at noon on May 13 at the arboretum. There will not be a program at this meeting as the field trip to TX A&M will take its place.

-Nelda Cooper  
Secretary

## In Attendance at April Meeting

Delores Black, Linda Buckner, Ila Jean Carothers, Jo Ann Clafferty, Nelda Cooper, Irene Dauphin, Anita Dawson, Kim Dougherty, Melody Fitzgerald, Kris Ford, Jeanette Kelly, Steven Lovecky, Louie McDaniel, Georgia Peterson, Ernie Petru, Anne Plasek, Sherry Prather, Sharon Richardson, Dawn Segrest, Jan Serface, Gale Storey, Barbara Vance, and Carol Wood.

Interns: Sandy Burlison, Karen Dotson, Missy Kinder, Donna Lindsey, Elizabeth Milam, Edrena Smith, and Sonia Warriner.

## Beasts and Blooms and Gardener's Gathering

A good time was had by all who volunteered at these two events. Both were well attended. Jeanette Kelly took this charming photo of Kim Dougherty and her daughters at the arboretum.



And this of a young man and Gale Storey, charming as well. The hats made from recycled materials were a big hit.



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### Editor's Comments

Some of our members for one reason or another choose to receive an abbreviated version of the newsletter that is photocopied

and mailed. Sonia Warriner has volunteered for this time-consuming job, and we certainly thank her.

I've been having way too much fun "researching" for items to include. In April I visited with Elizabeth Milam and got some great photos of her roses that were in bloom. In spite of unfavorable weather, she had some beauties in their prime. Here is one of them. In a separate e-mail you will get an invitation to go to Picasa and see the album containing other pictures. All you need to do is click on the link. If you then click slideshow they will show up larger.



Then the next day I went to Clifton to see and photograph some of Jane Anderson's spectacular iris. She has over 200 varieties, but they don't all bloom at the same time, and rain had caused a little fungal damage on a few of them, so these were the most showy at that particular time. You'll get an e-mail invitation to see that album, too. I forgot to take a photo of Jane except for her sandaled feet.



I asked each to write something about themselves, and here we go.

**Elizabeth Milam:**

Growing up the daughter of a cattle rancher in Bosque County, I learned from my parents all about the challenges of too much heat, never enough rain and the trials limestone outcroppings. However, they also taught me the pleasure in making things grow and in creating something worthwhile.

Over the years I married and had two daughters. My husband and I moved a couple of times and finally settled in McAllen in the Rio Grande Valley. Gardening there was entirely different with bougainvillea that grew over the roof of our house and poinsettias that could grow into large bushes...all very beautiful and lush, but little or no change in seasons and humidity that was unrelenting. Finally, in 1990, we moved back to Waco to spend more time with our families and just to be where we were happiest. We bought a great house in Woodway and I grew lots of iris and herbs and many other things; however, by 1993, my husband had become seriously ill and by the beginning of 1994, he was gone.

It was several years before I was again in a position to do much gardening, but in 2005, I was able to get a house that had a big enough yard to allow me to play outside a bit. Early on roses began to take center stage as I found I couldn't resist certain colors, or maybe the scent, or even just the shape of the blossom; some roses just called out to me. First I filled up the back yard, and then I went to work putting more beds in the front. In addition to roses I began to experiment with the use of plants that were said to be good in attracting bees, butterflies and certain beneficial bugs. This gave me a great excuse to spread my herbs and many other wonderful flowers all over the yard. The visual effect is sort of like a cottage garden which I have always had a secret yearning for anyway, so whether these

plant pairings work to achieve great benefits for my roses or not, I am having a great time.

**Jane Anderson:**

I am Jane Anderson, the one Master Gardener from Clifton. I came to love gardening through my paternal grandfather. After he retired, he became a truck farmer. We lived in Valley Mills & he had a huge garden that he & I (about 7 yrs. of age) worked during the week. Then on Saturdays we loaded all the vegetables in the back of his old pickup truck & drove to Waco to deliver produce to the driveways of all his customers.

My mother was the person instrumental in developing my love for flowers. She never worked outside the home and did not drive; so she spent a lot of time working in her flowerbeds. But, my favorite, of all the flowers she grew, were the irises. I now have over 200 varieties of tall bearded iris.

I have loved being a Master Gardener since completing the course in 2006. I've never worked with a more congenial group and have enjoyed every project in which I've been involved.

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As chance would have it, Neil Sperry's newsletter which came today has an article on Spuria iris, one of the types that Jane grows. It's the first in the slide show of her plants. (Others are the bearded, Siberian and Louisiana types.) It seems a person could spend years learning about this family of plants. Here's the link to the article by Jimmy Turner, Senior Horticulturist at the Dallas Arboretum.

<http://www.neilsperry.com/articles/2009/04/28/plant-of-the-month.html>

-James Storrs

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS - for MCLENNAN COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE

**April 24** ..... **Small Grain Tour**  
beginning in the field off of Highway 84 east of McGregor (signs are up) - begins at 9:00 am  
The program will conclude at the Texas A&M Research Center in McGregor with a free meal  
provided by our sponsors. **3 CEUs are available.**

**April 29** ..... **Pecan Management and nuisance Wildlife Control Clinic**  
Held at Russell's Pecan Orchard in Gholson, this program will focus on Pecan Management for the  
first part, and on Wildlife Control the first half. Program begins at 8:30 with registration, and will  
conclude around noon. Please bring your lawn chairs. There is no seating available.  
**2 CEUs are available.**

**April 30** ..... **Lawn Maintenance Program**  
Carleen Bright Arboretum. Registration begins at 8:30 am, and ending around noon.  
**1 CEU is available.**

**May 21** ..... **Farm Pond Management Seminar**  
MCC Highlander Ranch, 6:00 - 8:00 pm - **2 general CEUs available**

**May 27** ..... **Where Have All the Quail Gone?**  
Meridian Civic Center, Meridian Texas 8:30 am - Program begins at 9:00 am  
registration at the door-\$15.00  
Pre-registration: \$10.00 before May 25 to your County Extension Agent

**June 12** ..... **Eastside Row Crop Tour**  
begins in the field in Bellmead on Highway 84/Tirey Road and moving to the Bellmead Civic Center  
**3 CEUs: 1 general, 1 IPM, 1 Law and Regs**

**June 16** ..... **Stiles Farm Field Day**  
located in Thrall, Texas

**June 17** ..... **Poultry Seminar**  
Riesel High School - 8:00 - 2:00 pm - Program cost: \$10.00 - RSVP by 6/11  
**3 CEUs available: 1 IPM and 2 general**

**June 19** ..... **Westside Row Crop Tour**  
begins in the field on FM 938 West of McGregor and moving to the Crawford Community Center - **3  
CEUs: 1 general, 1 IPM, 1 Law and Regs**

**August 3-5** ..... **Beef Cattle Shortcourse**

**August 28** ..... **Small Grain/Winter Pasture Program**

**September 8** ..... **Central Texas Turf CEU/PCO in Hewitt**  
mclennan-tx.tamu.edu [mclennan@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:mclennan@ag.tamu.edu) 254-757-5180

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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.

### Flower Pots Needed

The most recent time I was at the Extension Office I noticed that the flower pot recycle bin  
was virtually empty, and what was there was unusable. It's possible that many of us are  
using pots in getting ready for the plant sale, but if you have any extra ones after the sale  
please consider contributing them for others to use.