

# A&M GARDEN CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

### November 2012



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#### OFFICERS

President	Kay Hamn
VP Programs	Hillary Jessup
VP Web	Sarah Barrick
VP Ed. Projects	Geneva Eubanks
VP Hospitality	Rose Smith
Rec. Secretary	Jane Cohen
Corres. Secretary	Sherry Ellison
Treasurer	Kelly Klimple
Historian	Sarah Barrick
Reporter	Judy Schafer
Members at Large	Michele Wehrheim Sandy Williams



#### UPCOMING EVENTS

11/1	Awards due to District Committee Chairs
11/2	10:00 A&M GC Board Mtg
11/7	Dist V, Zone II Fall Mtg Marlin
11/9	9:30 A&M GC Meeting College Station WW Facility

#### TIP OF THE MONTH

**Design Tip:** Contrast is the third Principle of Design we will cover. Contrast is achieved by placing opposite and unlike characteristics of a single element (Element of Design) together in order to emphasize their differences. Contrast provides interest in design. Contrast exists only with a physical characteristic of design. Examples would be the line may be short or long, straight or curved; color may be light or dark, intense or weak; size may be large or small; form may be spherical, triangular or square; texture might be rough or smooth. Too many contrasts in a design result in a busy and confusing design and this affects rhythm. When there are equal amounts of contrasting textures, colors, sizes, attention gets divided and there is no dominance. Think of contrast as what makes a great color combination in clothing - as well as contrasting textures in fabrics making accent pillows such a hot decorator item. Designs without contrast are dull and boring and fail to hold the interest of the observer.

**Horticulture Tip:** Soil is Mother Nature's preferred growing medium. Unfortunately, the soil in and around College Station has it's problems - alkaline and heavy clay clumps. The vast majority of us will struggle to amend our own soil, have some soil trucked in for raised beds, and use potting soil for container gardening. Soil serves three essential functions: it anchors the plant providing stability, it supplies moisture and nutrients to the roots, and it holds the oxygen required for root growth. Soils are composed of different-sized particles with spaces between to hold air and water. There are three major soil types distinguished by the size of their mineral particles. Sandy soil has the largest particles and drains quickly and admits air readily so it warms up quickly in the spring. Think hot sand at the beach! Silt has smaller particles with smaller spaces between them (sort of the midsize). Clay has the smallest particles with the least spaces between. It tends to pack and become dense, shutting out both air and water. Clay drains and warms slowly. Garden loam is considered the ideal mix of sand, silt and clay with the addition of humus, the stable end product of organic decomposition. Adding humus to any soil type improves its tilth or workability and helps break up clay particles, and prevents rapid water and nutrient loss in sandy soils. Humus is what we want from our composting efforts, and what we buy in bags at the garden center to add to our soils. In College Station, our soil is mostly clay with some sand and some silt. Your soil can vary greatly even over the distance of your yard--I have pockets of great garden loam and some real clay pits. Soil acidity or alkalinity is expressed by the

11/10 Keyhole Gardening Wksp  
SOS Ministries  
1700 Groesbeck St, Bryan

11/13 Dist V, Zone III Fall  
Meeting

#### NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Carolyn Guillotte Nov 28

Maryan Manson Nov 29

symbol pH which represents the potential of hydrogen ion concentration. On the pH scale 7 is neutral, 0-7 is acidic and 7-14 is alkaline. You can know your pH by testing a soil sample. Soil sampling is done at A&M and is relatively inexpensive and can help you to know your composition and pH which may help you to make amendments to your soil. This is very important if you have plants with special needs. There are plants that do very well in College Station - Crepe Myrtles and Mesquite; there are those that do poorly or will require a great deal of soil amendment - Azaleas and most Magnolias. However, that being said, you can grow both but it takes work. It has been my observation that many different products are used by gardeners to amend soils in College Station - earthworm castings, chicken manure, compost, and many others. Some people swear by specific additives like milk for tomato plants. Have your soil tested, and ask your fellow garden clubbers and Master Gardener friends what they do for ideas.

**Conservation Tip:** As the fall leaves come down and cover your lawn, think about using them for good purpose. Leaves are excellent mulch for your yard so if you mow with a mulching mower it will chop them up and they can go right down into help your grass. Leaves in flower beds can also serve as a mulch though I must admit, I'm not keen on leaving them as I always worry a copperhead will enjoy them and I will find him when I am scrounging around in there. Leaves can be added to compost piles as well. If you must bag them up, hopefully they are going to the city compost system. Be careful NOT to let leaves collect in the street as they can clog the sewer and waste water systems.

**Holiday Thoughts:** As the Holiday Season approaches, and we have so many wonderful times to look forward to with our family and friends, consider those less fortunate than yourself. Since we all are lovers of the earth and it's bounty, consider doing one or more of the following in November or December. Buy a few extra items at the grocery store and drop them in one of the food barrels at the front of the store or your church food drive this month, if you are lucky enough to have a producing fall vegetable garden then share with a neighbor or the food pantry, volunteer to serve a meal at Twin City Mission, donate some spare change to the red kettles of the Salvation Army, clear out your closets of older but serviceable coats and donate them to a local charity so someone can stay warm this winter, donate personal care items to the women's shelter, donate toys or books for children, take a few bouquets of flowers to a nursing home, and give thanks for the blessings in your own life.

#### NOVEMBER A&M GARDEN CLUB MEETING

November 9, 9:30 AM at College Station Waste Water Facility, 2200 North Forest Parkway, CS. Speaker will be Marlene Gillman of Killeen. Marlene is a Bell County Master Gardener, longtime Killeen Garden Club Member, and current District V Trustee as well as co-chair of the Texas Garden Club Inc. State Convention Spring 2013 here in College Station. She will be presenting a program on "Yard Art" as well as updating us on our participation in the Spring Convention. There will be a mini topic on Native Plants by Helen Quinn, and refreshments. (Directions to WW Facility at [www.amgardenclub.com](http://www.amgardenclub.com)).

## OCTOBER A&M GARDEN CLUB MEETING



The October meeting was held on October 5, at the First Baptist Church. Special arrangements had to be made to change this meeting due to a conflict with the State Fall Convention in Abilene. The program was "Landscape Drip Irrigation" by Lymand Almand who did a fabulous job and brought actual pieces to show and pass around of the systems. There was a mini program on Fall Vegetables for the SOS ministries and help is needed to collect plants

and follow up with our efforts at publicity. Please contact Jane Cohen or Hillary Jessup for information.



## KEYHOLE GARDEN WORKSHOP

November 10 at 8:30 AM at the Save Our Streets Ministries on Groesbeck Street in Bryan. The program will be conducted by Dr. Deb Tolman, a regional expert, and the public is welcome. Registration is required and is available on the webpage or contact Jane Cohen or Hillary Jessup. Members are collecting cardboard, newspapers, and plant donations for the garden. Those who have participated so far have really enjoyed their interaction with the children and are hoping for a great turnout from members and the public. Tell your friends and encourage them to come so they can see how to make one.



## OCTOBER SOS WORK

The A&M Garden Club members are busy building the Keyhole Garden at the SOS Ministry site. Many members have assisted already and include: Jane Cohen (and her fabulous hardworking husband Bob), Rose Smith, Kay Hamn, Sandy Williams, Fran Sadler, Carolyn Guillotte, Geneva Eubanks, and Hillary Jessup. Kim and Ken from Home Depot are instructing participants in techniques for the building of the wall. Acme donated bricks and Lowes donated the cement mix for the mortar. Many hands assisted with mixing and spreading. Apparently, we are learning a skill that pays \$18/hour!! The kids are really "into" it. Because we can only do two or three layers and then need to let the cement set, it is being done over several dates this month. Thanks to those who are pitching in on this project!!!





**TEXAS GARDEN CLUB FALL CONVENTION IN ABILENE, OCT 10-12**

The TGC State Convention theme was "Going Native", and the ladies of the Abilene Garden Club did their best to make us welcome in Abilene. There were speakers on Native Habitat, and Wildflowers, workshops on parliamentary procedure, awards, and membership as well as a special reception with the National Garden Club President Shirley Nicolai. The highlight for your A&M Garden Club members who attended was the selection of Idalia Aguilar and Sandee Walters as co-winners of Garden Club Member of the Year. This is the highest individual honor TGC can award at the state level, and we are very fortunate to have Idalia as a club member. She has contributed tirelessly at the local, state, regional, and national level to National Garden Clubs. The award comes with an engraved silver bowl, a bouquet of roses, and the best wishes of our entire club. Jane Cohen, District V Director, Idalia Aguilar, State Historian, and Heather White attended the convention.

