

Can You Dig It?

FIRST
QTR
2019

"Get It Growing" 2020 Calendar Photo Entires

The LSU AgCenter has issued a call for entires of photographs for the 2020 Get It Growing calander. This is a chance for amateur and pro photographers from Louisiana to submit their work and earn recognition if their photos are selected for the calendar. THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS FEB 28, 2019.

Photos chosen for the featured monthly pages will receive five copies of the published calendar, their names inculed with their photos. Other contributors will be listed with their photos and they receive two copies of the calendar. Photos must be original high-resolution digital images on CD with your name, address, phone number and email address attached. Entry forms and guidelines are available at: www.LSUAgCenter.com/GetItGrowingCalendar.



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Welcome Back, Can You Dig It!

A big Welcome Back for the Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners Quarterly Newsletter!

2019 begins the start of new adventures and the rebirth of old favorites, 'Can You Dig It' is an old favorite come to life again. Hope that you like the fresh new look!

Now, I don't want this to be a one person show, so I'm asking for articles/input suggestions, personal interest stories about our members and events that PHLMG's might like to attend or anything else that PHLMG's would consider interesting.

At the start of 2019, PHLMG Board members met to brain storm on activities that may ignite master gardeners participation. Here are a few of the ideas we came up with. Tell me what you think, add to the list something you feel might be fun. We want PHLMG's to have fun while learning new things and re-discovering some oldies but goodies.

IDEAS:

*Re-start the PHLMG Speakers Bureau. Often request are made for a Master Gardener to

Speak to a group or club. You earn volunteer hours and get to meet interesting people. To assist potential speakers, at the Feburary MG meeting we will show you how to create a PowerPoint presentation.

*Possible Field Trip in late April or early May to Plantation Point to see thousands of Louisiana Iris bloom! Plantation Point is in Mooringsport, LA, can you say "road Trip"!

*How about some hands-on garden crafts? Like making concrete leaf birdbaths for your garden. May, June or October would be good times.

*A Second trip to Plantation Point in October to pot up FREE Louisiana Iris for our spring plant sale.

* Take in one of the many Seminar Workshops given as a group trip. The American Rose Center has one in Feburary.

Not only would these activities be entertaining, but you earn hours, too! So grab your garden gloves, trowels and spades cause **YOU CAN DIG IT!**

Submitted by Wanda Medlock-Smith

Piney Hills Chapter
Louisiana Master
Gardeners
Refreshment
Committee 1st Qtr

FEBRUARY

Linda Berry, Genie
Burkhalter, Mary Ann &
Bud Perryman, Barbara
Sisler, Wanda Medlock-
Smith

MARCH

Evalyn Cabell, Glenda
Collums, Sue Ranger,
Carolyn Rinehart.

The PHLMG
refreshment committee
assist in making the
regular meeting even
more worth attending.
Together they provide
meal to members who
otherwise would miss
dinnertime. It is a valued
part of each meeting for
members and guest
alike!



First Quarter of the Year Gardening Tips

Helpful tips for late winter
heading toward the spring
that will give you a headstart
in your garden!

JANUARY

Deciduous shade trees can be pruned almost anytime, but winter is a good time! When a tree is leafless, you can more clearly see the structure of the branches and decide what needs to be pruned. Also, limbs weigh less without all the leaves.

Now is a good time to make hardwood cuttings of pears, figs, roses and hydrangeas. Cuttings should be taken from the ends of branches and be 6 to 8 inches long.

Weeds do not take off for the winter. Keep beds of flowers and shrubs well mulched to minimize weed problems. Make sure the mulch is about 2 inches thick. Promptly deal with weed problems before they get too far out of hand- either by pulling, hoeing or properly using herbicides.

FEBRUARY

Clip ground covers back by

Late February to remove unattractive foliage, rejuvenate the plants and control growth. Common ground cover that could be groomed are liriopse, mondo or monkey grass, Asiatic jasmine and Japanese ardisia.

Many hardy fruit trees should be pruned in February. For excellent information on how to prune many of the fruit trees grown around Louisiana homes, check for a free copy of "The Louisiana Home Orchard" at your parish AgCenter extension office or download a copy from the publications section of the www.lsuagcenter.com.

Fertilize fruit trees and bushes this month.

You should start planting root vegetables like potatoes now. Cut seed potatoes into pieces with at least one eye and about the size of an egg; then plant 4 inches deep about 12 inches apart in well-prepared, sunny beds.

MARCH

Plant seeds of these vegetables into your garden this month: cantalope, collards, corn, cucumbers, lima beans, mustard, pumpkin, radishes, snap beans, zucchini, southern peas, summer squash, swiss chard, watermelons and winter squash. Plant transplants of eggplant, kohirabi, peppers and tomatoes.

It should be safe to plant tender bedding plants such as marigold, zinnia, blue daze, pentas, celosia, salvia, portulaca and melampodium in the end of March for those of us who live in North Louisiana.

This month treat trees, shrubs, vines and ground covers to control scale insects.

Start looking for Louisiana Super Plants in nurseries this month, too.



Is Hydroponic Gardening For You?

WHAT IS HYDROPONICS?

To put it simply, hydroponics is growing plants without soil. Soil provides essential nutrients for plant growth. These same nutrients can be supplied using alternative methods. Hydroponic systems dispense water-soluble nutrients derived from both organic and conventional sources that create beneficial relationships with plant roots. So, hydroponics is simply recreating the role of soil. Plants rarely maximize their full potential in soil, there are always factor that slow down their growth.

FIVE REASONS TO GROW HYDROPONIC

1. Doesn't require quality soil.
2. Requires less space.
3. Can be used in any location.
4. Uses less water.
5. No weeding and no herbicides!

KEY FEATURES OF A HYDROPONIC SYSTEM

Hydroponic systems are quite simple. At its most basic level here is what you will need to make your own unit. To create one, you will need some kind of waterproof

Reservoir to contain the nutrient solution of a mix of fertilizer and water and the plants themselves. Plants grown in hydroponic systems can grow faster and yield more. You'll also need a growing area, which is the place that the plants will live. The size and type of growing area defines the kind of plants you can grow and how much they will yield. Finally you will need a growing medium which is needed to store and release the nutrients to the plants roots. The fertilizers used for hydroponics are very different from those used by soil gardening.

2019 Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners Elected Officers

Meet your 2019 Elected Officers:

President

Marjorie Thomas

Vice President

Wanda Medlock-Smith

Secretary

Tracie Wilder

Treasurer

Richard White

Historian/Parliamentarian

Linda Berry

Members –At-Large

Kelly Williams and
Barbara Sisler

Volunteer Coordinator

Glenda Collums

Local MG Coordinator

John Monzingo

This Month's Q&A Gardening Grows

Q: Can I plant leftover Easter Lillies that I always get during the Easter season?

A: Don't throw away those Easter Lillies! Gifted Easter Lillies are a great bargain for your gardens. Once the flowers have all faded, you can plant that potted Easter Lily outside in a garden bed. Choose a location that receives sun through most of the day and some shade in the afternoon. Avoid low areas or plant the lilies in raised beds to provide good drainage. Here's how to plant:

Step 1. Trim off the top of the plant where the flowers bloomed- do not remove any green foliage.

Step 2. Enrich the planting area by digging in a few inches of compost.

Step 3. Remove the plant from the pot and plant so that the top of the rootball is level with or slightly below the soil of the bed. The bulbs should be about 3 inches deep in the soil.

Step 4. Mulch and water in. Bulbs go dormant in midsummer, and the foliage will turn yellow.

Cut back at that time.

Step 5. Fertilize in October as new growth begins.





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Gardeners

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[facebook.com/PHLMG](https://www.facebook.com/PHLMG)

Upcoming Events

- **Feb 8-9 The Gulf District Mid-Winter Workshop at American Rose Center**

The 2 day event host a full schedule of learning opportunities. Friday Feb 8 includes a wine social at 5 pm and a presentation of "The Year of The River 2019: How Steam Brought Gardens to the South". Saturday Feb 9 starts the morning with coffee and other goodies. The day includes lunch, raffle and silent auction. Keynote Speaker is Paul Zimmerman and a host of others who will show you how to make your gardens great. For detailed information and to register go online to: www.gulfdistrictrose.org.

- **Feb 21- Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners Regular Meeting**

Regular meeting PHLMG at 6:00pm Webster Parish Extension Office. Speaking topic "MG Speakers Bureau using PowerPoint" by MG Wanda Smith.

- **Feb 23 – Buds & Blooms First at United Methodist Church**

Guest Speaker this year is Jeanne Wegley of Dallas Arboretum. Her topic will be "Go Big or Go Small- gardening practices at the Arboretum that transfer to the home garden". Other speakers are Mark Wilson, Northwest Louisiana Horticulture Specialist and John Dillon, Literature Teacher Minden High. Please join us for wonderful food, fun and door prizes plus a raffle! 9am – noon, registration begins at 8:30am Cost \$15.00. This is a PHLMG fundraiser for the 4H Garden Contest.

- **Mar 21- Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners Regular Meeting**

Regular meeting PHLMG at 6:00pm Webster Parish Extension Office. Speaker Ron Killingsworth, Louisiana Iris Society. Topic "Growing Louisiana Iris".

- **Mar 25- Deadline for Can You Dig It? 2nd quarter Newsletter Submissions!**