

Can You Dig It?

Second QTR
2019



this issue

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What's Up With Can You Dig It!

Did you think the Can You Dig It Newsletter was a one quarter wonder?! NOT A CHANCE!

I just made an executive decision to make the PHLMG newsletter publish date May, August, November and February. Most Master Gardener Chapters publish a newsletter at the beginning of the quarter, waiting one month makes ours available in a less cluttered field.

RE-CAP LAST QUARTER

Last quarter was a busy one for PHLMG! It kicked off with **Buds and Blooms** and what a great speaker! The turn out was great and all the proceeds go to 4H Youth Gardening Contest and 4H Scholarships. Great job Patti Walker, Chair.

In April, Our fundraiser **Greenthumb Jamboree** went off without a hitch! The weather was beautiful, Ventors were plentiful (Thank You Barb Sisler!), plants a plenty and a good turn out. The Sugar Kettle Raffle profit was highest yet! Thanks to our Chairs- Janice Clark and Frankie Brand.

A number of members got a chance to earn extra education points during a visit to **Plantation Point** on May 5th. And, we went home with Irises!

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

UP NEXT

Have you signed up for the **PHLMG Speakers Bureau**? Go and speak to a group or club. You earn volunteer hours and get to meet interesting people. The list will be available at the Ag Office for caller request. For more info, see Wanda Smith.

Sorry to tell you PHLMG will not be conducting a Master Gardeners Class this summer. Unfortunately, there were not enough applications submitted before the May first deadline. That means we will have a regular meeting in August. Accepting speaker suggestions!

Hope the remainder of the newsletter will inform and entertain you. 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 2nd Qtr

MAY

Kay Boykin, Judy Burge,
Rodrick Gilbert, Ann
Mears, Kelly Williams

JUNE

Bobbi Anderson, Gale
Anderson, Frankie
Brand, Geanie Cross,
Joye Synco, Tracie
Wilder

JULY

Barbara Burge, Pam
Gruner, Brenda
Perryman

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!



Second Quarter of the Year Gardening Tips

Helpful tips for spring and
summer that will give a
bounty of blooms and fruit in
your garden!

MAY

It is very important to pull up and dispose of cool-season annual weeds, such as henbit, bedstraw and chickweed, now. These weeds currently are setting thousands of seeds that will plague you next winter if not removed.

Pay attention to training and tying rambler and climbing roses to the arbor, fence, trellis or other structure you are training them on. Major pruning of once-blooming ramblers and climbing roses is best done in June after they finish blooming.

Great warm-season bedding plants for sunny areas include amaranthus, balsum, begonia, blue daze, coleus, cosmos, dusty miller, lantana, marigold, ornamental peppers, periwinkles, salvia, sunflower, verbena and zinnias.

JUNE

It's time to cut back canes of

blackberries that produced

earlier. Also, cut back the vegetative canes that will produce for you next year to keep the plants under control.

Vegetables and herbs to plant this month include collards, cucuzzi, eggplants, hot peppers, okra, spinach, squashes, sweet potatoes, southern peas, basil, oregano, lemon balm, mint, garlic chives, rosemary, yarrow and bergamont. Good drought and heat tolerant choices to plant now in summer flowerbeds and containers include portulaca, purslane, lantana, periwinkle, sedum, yarrow, sunflower, blackeyed susan, butterfly weed, gaillardia, purple coneflower and perennial verbena.

Prune gardenias and hydrangas, if needed, after they finish flowering. Finish pruning by early July to avoid interfering with flower bud set.

JULY

Keep caladiums well watered during hot, dry weather to keep the foliage in good shape through the summer. Apply a fertilizer now to encourage vigorous growth. Break off any flowers that form.

During the summer, plants in pots outside dry quickly and require frequent watering. You can reduce the frequency of watering by moving the pots to shadier spots, transplanting into larger containers or using plastic or glazed ceramic pots instead of terracotta pots.

Pinch coleus occasionally as they grow, starting while they are still relatively short. This will keep the plants more compact and encourage branching to create a fuller, more attractive plant.

If you need herbicide recommendations, visit www.lsuagcenter.com.



Equipment For The Home Gardener

Growing a vegetable garden is virtually impossible without at least some basic hand tools! Here are a few suggestions on selecting the best tool.

BASIC HAND TILLAGE TOOLS- SHOVELS, SPADES, FORKS

The type of tool you need depends on the job you have to do.

Round-point shovel. The basic digging tool. This shovel is good for general diggings such as spading or digging holes for plants.

Square-edged spades. If you need to make a straight cut, as in edging your garden, you may need a square edged spade.

Tile spade. Another special tool variously called "sharpshooter"

Is useful for digging deep, narrow trenches.

Spading fork. Spading forks are not the same as pitch forks. They can be used for turning soil and are well suited to digging potatoes, onions, carrots and so forth.

GARDEN CULTIVATORS

Weather it's a small garden or a larger garden, many manual cultivation tools are available for your use. A power rotary tiller is not always necessary.

Long-handled hoes. These are the traditional cultivating tool for small gardeners. Hoes come in many shapes. More important than shape is keeping the blade sharp.

Scuffle hoes with/without spiked wheels. These are designed to cut in two directions. They can have a

Row of spiked wheels mounted behind the scuffle hoe blade. Thus they can work twice as fast as a conventional hoe.

GARDEN TOOL QUALITY

You probably have noticed the wide range in prices of garden tools. You may have wondered what you get for the additional cost or how to evaluate actual quality when selecting a tool. One of the major distinctions between low-quality and high-quality tools is the way the toolhead is manufactured.

Welded Heads vs Forged Heads. Low priced tools generally have welded toolheads. The welding process weakens the tool but is OK for light duty. Forged Heads have a higher price because the entire toolhead is formed from a single piece of steel. Forged tools will be stronger and last longer.

This Month's Q&A Gardening Grows

Q: What can I do to help the environment and still have a beautiful landscape?

A: Landscape maintenance activities like mowing, pruning and raking generate waste that you can return to the soil, recycling valuable nutrients. Try a few of these simple ideas to get started.

: Leaves and pine needles provide a source of mulch that is a real asset in the landscape, and it's virtually free! If your yard generates more that you can use, compost or share some with a neighbor.

: After pruning trees and shrubs, toss small cuttings into a compost pile or behind a shrub.

: Recycle while you mow. Leave clippings on the lawn to decompose and return nitrogen to the soil. Never dump grass clippings or other yard waste into storm drains or waterways.

Such activities pollute water systems and clogs drains.

: For procrastinators who don't mow regularly, mulching mowers cut grass into smaller pieces, speeding decomposition.

: If grass grows too tall between mowings, spread clippings behind shrubs or add them to a compost pile to avoid unsightly buildup.

: Where grass doesn't serve a function, opt for low maintenance groundcovers instead of grass, or underplant trees with shrubs and groundcovers.

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



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Upcoming Events

- **May 9- 4H Fun Day**

Third through sixth graders of Webster Parish rotate to various stations at the Webster Parish Fairgrounds. PHLMG teach a gardening-related topic at one of the stations. Amanda Wilson is looking for volunteers to act as teacher/guides. Contact her or John Monzingo for more info and to volunteer.

This activity counts as approved LSU Ag volunteer hours!

- **May 11-12 Le Tour des Jardins 2019**

Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners annual tour showcasing Shreveport lovely privately owned gardens. Tour is Saturday and Sunday 10am to 5pm each day. Vendors will be at the Pioneer Heritage Center LSUS Campus. Tickets are \$10 in Advance, \$15 at the door.

- **May 16- Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners Regular Meeting**

Regular meeting PHLMG at 6:00pm Special meeting place – Marjorie Thomas' House! This special meeting will be a picnic and plant swap. If you have a favorite you would like to share, bring it. We will discuss plant care and enjoy the moderate spring weather.

- **June 20- Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners Regular Meeting**

Regular meeting PHLMG at 6:00pm Webster Parish Extension Office. Speaker Loice Kendrick-Lacy, certified Natural Habitat Homeowner and author. "All about The Care and Attracting Butterflies and The Upcoming Butterfly Festival"

- **Jul 18 Piney Hills Louisiana Master Gardeners Regular Meeting**

Regular meeting PHLMG at 6:00pm Webster Parish Extension Office. Speaker will be Master Gardener Terry Clason. Topic – Plant, soil and water relationships.