



HORTICULTURE HORIZONS

The Newsletter of the Oklahoma Horticultural Society

SPRING 2003
APRIL/MAY

Oklahoma Gardeners Enjoy Daniel Hinkley's Visit

by Olen Thomas

We were blessed to have had Dan Hinkley visit Oklahoma this March 6-8 in conjunction with our 2003 Annual Speaker Series Event. As you recall, Dan Hinkley hales from the Seattle area by way of Michigan. He opened Heronswood Nursery in 1989. He is a renowned plant collector and explorer having visited such remote areas as China, Korea, Nepal, Turkey, Chile, and Mexico. While in Oklahoma he was given a short tutorial on our native Blackjack / Post Oak (Cross Timbers), short and tall grass prairie and visited such exotic locations as Sunshine Nursery at Clinton.

His Thursday night talk in Tulsa was titled

"Gardening in the Shade." This talk shared in common with the others, the same thread of finding plants from around the world and then seeing them trialed in the Heronswood garden. It was standing room only with the crowd estimated at 200. Those in attendance report a particularly witty and jovial time.

Friday's talk was presented in Stillwater to a crowd of about 135. "Plant Marriages: Exceptional Combinations of Flower, Foliage and Structure" was very well received by the attentive audience. Exotic plants from around the world were shown in winning combinations in the Heronswood Garden.

ARNOLD'S ROAD TRIP

On Saturday, March 15th, the Oklahoma Horticultural Society sponsored a bus trip to Arnold's Greenhouse in eastern Kansas. Several members made the trip and were rewarded with a beautiful spring day. The drive through the Flint Hills and tall grass of Kansas was something to see.

As for Arnold's, it truly is a gardener's paradise. With over twenty greenhouses and a covered plant shopping area that is one of the largest in America, there was something for everyone. They have (had!) over 4000 varieties of plants from trees and shrubs to perennials and aquatics. Our going in mid March allowed us to beat the spring rush and the pickings were great.

With the bus stuffed to the brim, we were fortunate we didn't have to stop at a weigh station at the state line. We may have had to unload some booty. It was a great trip and if you get the chance, I highly recommend the trip. *Hugh Stout*

Saturday's finale was titled "Plant Collecting in Turkey and Other Countries Similar to Oklahoma." This Oklahoma City talk was given at the OKC Zoo following the annual meeting of the Oklahoma Horticultural Society. The audience was counted to be 105. Once again Mr. Hinkley used exotic locales, humor, and personal warmth to focus our attention on a succession of plants. His recurring theme in this and the other lectures was: "I selected this plant to discuss because I think you can grow it in Oklahoma." Thank you sir. We look forward to giving them a try.

The Annual Speaker Series Event
is made possible by:

The Kirkpatrick Family Fund
The Oklahoma City Zoological Park
The Educational Endowment of the
Oklahoma Horticultural Society

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is ready to pop, which to our members means the New Year is just beginning. Dan Hinkley, our guest speaker this winter, managed to get all who heard him fired up for the coming growing season. His program in Tulsa drew a standing room only crowd and Stillwater was just as popular. I wish to thank and congratulate Russell Studebaker for organizing Hinkley's visit and the Tulsa program. I also want to thank Steve Owens for handling the Stillwater portion of his visit. Of course the Kirkpatrick Foundation once again covered the lion's share of our costs, without which this wouldn't have been possible and the Oklahoma City Zoo once again provided the beautiful site for our Annual Meeting and Hinkley's program in OKC. We are truly grateful for their generosity. The book sales appeared brisk at all three sites as well, which helps us to cover some of our expenses.

Due to a glitch in the calendar this year, our Garden tour for Connoisseurs and the Festival in the Park at Will Rogers Park have both ended up on June 7th this year. Although we tried to move our tour, some of our homeowners had already committed to June 7th and couldn't move. Our committees, however, are confident that we can do both successfully and use each event to promote the other. Both will be hard pressed for volunteers and ask that those interested sign up. Some may want to help at both events, which will be possible, but will need to be scheduled and coordinated early on. Sign up at our monthly meetings or contact Sharon Beasley or Shirley Kennedy directly.

Lastly, on behalf of all of us, I want to thank the Co-Chairs of our Ad-Hoc Committee on Will Rogers Park, JoAnne Vervinck and Warren Filley. These two, and their Committee, have brought together all the groups that call Will Rogers home and many other concerned citizens from across the state to seek the truth about proposed budget cuts and to search for solutions to the effects these cuts will cause. Their efforts include meetings with the Mayor, City Council members, neighborhood associations and a question and answer session for all concerned with the Director of Parks & Recreation. They have caused a mountain of praise to be heaped on our Society from all directions and we are grateful. It is an ongoing effort and one that

will not cease, so stay tuned to our web site, www.okhort.org, for further developments.

Happy gardening, selling, growing, planning, building or whatever is it you do..

Hugh Stout, Jr.

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Bus card	\$15.00	\$20.00
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1/2 page	45.00	55.00
full page	85.00	100.00

Issue	Deadline
Spring	March 1
Summer	May 1
Fall	August 15
Winter	November 15

OHS WEBSITE:
www.okhort.org

COMING ATTRACTION: Garden Tour for Connoisseurs

Our garden tour is set for Saturday, June 7, 2003, rain or shine. We have, as always, some wonderful gardens lined up for the day. Bob Corcoran is heading up the garden tour committee this year and has already started working with the committee to plan our fifth successful garden tour.

So get ready to add your name to the volunteer list again as we will need many people to make it a success. It is even more important that we beat the drums for people to get involved because, due to circumstances beyond our control, the Festival in the Park (at Will Rogers Park) happens to be the same day as the tour. The board decided that we would still man a booth there to sell plants as we always have, which means that we need volunteers for both activities - lots of volunteers. Consider that we used 78 volunteers for the garden tour last year and you can see that we will be in a bind if many of us don't dedicate ourselves to helping out this year with both events.

If you have never been able to work the garden tour, but can this year, please don't hesitate to sign up. If you have non-OHS member friends or relatives who could work a shift with you in a garden, recruit them. If you are a new member, sign up - it's a great way to become acquainted with other OHS members. Remember, there is a free garden tour ticket for those who work the tour. Before you lay this newsletter down and lose track of it, make a call to volunteer NOW. You can contact Jeanie Spence (751-8799) or Sharon Beasley (392-4727 or e-mail gardener@pldi.net) to let them know you will volunteer. (We both have answering machines) The sooner you call, the more chance you have for getting your time preference to work. You can also call Jeanie and Sharon if you have questions about volunteering.

For new people, the tour volunteers work a 3 hour shift at an assigned garden. Volunteers are needed to take money, hand out tickets and be of assistance to visitors who go through the garden. You will be glad you worked.

———Sharon Beasley

GEORGE J. VACLAVEK AWARD RECIPIENTS

Here is a list of the recipients of the George J. Vaclavek Awards to date:

2/6/99	George J. Vaclavek Marjorie Moesel Wolfgang Oehme
6/19/99	John E. Kirkpatrick
9/19/99	Dr. Richard Payne Preston Warren Hugh Hedger
2/12/00	Mary Ann Haliburton Dick Moesel H. Marc Cathey
9/24/00	Loretta F. Aaron
2/24/01	Wm.C. Welch John Fluitt
2/16/02	Dr. Warren Filley Pearl Pearson Steve Bieberich
9/22/02	Charles Shackelford Johnny Satterlee
3/18/03	Dr. Carl Whitcomb

TREASURER'S REPORT

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Will Rogers Park Horticultural Gardens and Arboretum In Jeopardy?

by JoAnne Vervinck

For weeks now, ugly rumors, like black shadows across the sun, have floated across our horizon, sending a chill over all who heard them. The City Parks and Recreation Department, it was said, planned to gut Will Rogers Park by plowing up the rose garden's 3,000 roses and cutting down the arboretum's irreplaceable tree and shrub collection, where an estimated 6,000 horticulture students have learned plant identification since 1987, and planting these areas to grass to limit plant maintenance to mowing. The irreplaceable antique curved-glass conservatory would be demolished (for a fascinating history of Lord & Burnham Conservatories, see www.buffalogardens.com/historical/Crystal_Palaces/body_crystal_palaces.html), and its cactus gardens with rare specimens disposed of. The Garden Exhibition Center, built by Garden Club funds and home base for nearly two dozen garden clubs and 20 other clubs, would be closed. In short, many of the best features of Will Rogers Park as we know it would cease to exist.

These troubling rumors prompted quick action by the Oklahoma Horticultural Society. Acting as spearhead, we took on the leadership role, forming a focal point for the 20-some other garden clubs to rally behind. President Hugh Stout appointed Warren Filley and JoAnne Vervinck co-chairs of a committee to investigate the actual situation at Will Rogers Park and to work with the City in any way possible to keep, even improve, the horticultural features and plant diversity of the park.

Nearly 60 people concerned with the future of Will Rogers Park attended a public meeting held March 11th to sort through the rumors and ascertain and assess the direction of the City Parks Department. The meeting ended with the decision to invite Parks Department head Wendel Whisenhunt to discuss the park's fate. At the March 18th follow-up public meeting, Mr. Whisenhunt informed us that the Parks Department, which is in charge of maintenance and construction at all city parks, staffs & operates the Civic Center, staffs the Myriad Gardens Agency and Foundation, maintains the grounds at municipal buildings, mows roadway medians, and administers City pools, recreation and athletics, Oklahoma County Game and Fish Commission, City Arts Program, and the City Trails Advisory Commission citywide, must cut two million dollars (11%) from next year's budget for operations beginning July 1st. The Parks Department, therefore, has proposed monetary cuts in all the above areas, Will Rogers Park being only one of the places affected.

Mr. Whisenhunt told us that the park's Garden Exhibition Center, tennis center,

amphitheater, 2 rental picnic shelters, senior center and conservatory would remain open, with the same hours and schedules. The rose garden will stay in place but volunteer help is needed to maintain it. The arboretum will stay. Greenhouse production of plant material will be closed down, because the City believes it can save money by purchasing plants instead of growing them.

Staff at Will Rogers will be cut from 10 at all times to 8 who share duties at other places as well as at Will Rogers. During the seven warm months, there will be 2 full-time people for maintenance at Will Rogers, with 1 of them full time all year. Also, Lewis Scott and Jane Gonzales will remain on staff doing their current jobs. The Parks Department believes it will need much greater assistance from the Garden Clubs and will ask for help. A sticking point is that Cathy Connel, now horticulturist in charge of the park and volunteer coordinator, will be transferred to a different location. Her supervisor, Bill Bird, will assume her duties in addition to his present ones. His specialty is turf grasses and golf course maintenance, not horticulture.

It was strongly pointed out to Mr. Whisenhunt that public sentiment about the loss of permanent full-time staff, and especially loss of the unique horticultural and public relations talents of Cathy Connel, rides high. A general feeling of displeasure permeated the room during discussion of proposed staff cuts. The Parks Department's decision to stop locking the park's gates at night (because no staff will be available at evening closing time) is feared to encourage drive-through vandalism and other undesirable behaviors that will harm the plants

and decrease the park's public appeal. It is generally believed that loss of permanent staff and horticultural expertise will also allow deterioration of plant material, which will eventually result in the loss of the rose garden, arboretum, and other items listed above. Therefore, the core issues of the rumors originally circulated were not put to rest; consequences of proposed actions are merely postponed.

The second public meeting was followed a week later by a work meeting of a small group representing the Oklahoma Horticultural Society, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, Oklahoma City Beautiful, neighborhood associations, and the current Ward 2 Councilperson. The committee wants to examine the needs of Will Rogers Park in the light of the budget position of the City Parks and Recreation Department, and to formulate an action plan to preserve the park's horticultural diversity in a fashion that will please both the public and the Parks Department.

This will be an ongoing process, tempered by the need to hurry before the proposed budget is adopted by City Council. A multi-pronged approach seems to be in order. Because the departmental budgets are being cut city-wide, and the City legally cannot operate at a deficit as the Federal Government does, money-saving approaches are a necessity. But cost cuts do not have to sacrifice the historic nature and diverse plant material of Will Rogers Park. Money can be saved by wise selection and location of plants, thereby cutting mowing, spraying, and plant replacement costs. Partnerships with private and not-for-profit

organizations can relieve some of the cash burden for park facility operations.

A not-for-profit entity created especially for the park could legally accept donations for park support. Oklahoma City Beautiful's Adopt-a-Park program, neighborhood associations, garden clubs, and individual volunteerism are avenues for people to help at the park. Fostering a supportive, user-friendly Parks Department, speedy paperwork processing, and including a horticulturist in Parks' upper management level are ways the City can help. Calling Council's attention to other similar-sized cities' horticultural choices, their economic impact, and resulting pleasing community appearance will remind decision-makers that beauty, economic development, and quality-of-life go hand in hand toward creating a desirable environment for their citizenry.

You are urged to contact your Councilperson, attend and speak at City Council meetings, attend Parks Commission meetings and otherwise participate in civic business in order to create awareness on the part of the City's government. Encourage them to protect the beauty that our City now has, and remind them of the economic impact and national acclaim our horticultural assets provide when our City hosts national plant conferences (Daylily Conference 2001, Iris Convention 2007, Garden Writers of America 2007, pending) or entices corporations to relocate here.

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Using Wildflower Seed in the Landscape

Using wildflowers in landscaping can be like putting pieces of a puzzle together. Most gardening is this way, a research project, then an action plan. Each wildflower variety comes from a unique habitat that the gardener is trying to simulate. However with a little know-how the puzzle comes nicely, naturally together. Wildflower seed is the most economical way to establish wildflowers in areas with some sunlight available. Nursery propagated wild plants are not always available at the local garden center and because some are difficult to propagate and slow growing, they are often more expensive. While the cost is worth the investment of landscaping to enhance your site's natural conditions, in large areas seed is more useful and cost-effective. Here are the steps involved in proper planting:

Planning your wildflower display

Choose a site that is full sun (six or more hours of direct sun in summer) or has partial day's sun (less than six hours), filtered light or high shade from tall trees. Consider the viewer. From where and from what distance will it be viewed? If your site is a field or fence row or ditch or distant hillside, you might choose a wildflower seed mixture for a meadow effect. If the site is a flower bed or border you may wish to have a garden plan, which sows different individual varieties in patterns or natural swaths. Take note of the environmental conditions: Wet or well-drained, cool and protected or exposed and hot, what other wild plants are growing there?, how much sun or shade? These observations will help you make educated decisions when choosing the varieties of flowers that will do best there. Don't just pick the ones you like but learn about and look for ones that are suited to your conditions.

Preparing your site

Wildflower seed must have contact with the soil. This is very important because flower seeds cannot germinate on grass. Flower seedlings need a competitive advantage to establish. Once they are started and have had the moisture and sunlight needed, you shouldn't worry about them. They are good competitors if they get a good start. Getting rid of what's there. We use and recommend Round-up as a general broad range herbicide especially if you want to plant areas of bermuda grass or fescue. Round-up should be sprayed when the grass or weeds are actively growing. This makes summer a good time to prepare a site for fall or winter planting.

Covering the area in plastic during the hot summer is an alternative that will kill many weeds. If your site is not prepared by fall, winter and spring still afford excellent times for putting seed out. You will want to rake off dead vegetation then, by tilling and raking, remove as many grass roots, etc. as possible. If later, after flower seedlings have emerged, you want to control invading grass, you may use a grass-specific herbicide like Poast (also labeled Vantage) or Ornamec that will not harm the wildflowers. Exposing the soil. Our favorite method for exposing the soil is the renovator or dethatcher (available for rent) because it roughs the soil surface without tilling deeply which can bring up dormant weed seeds. Otherwise, rake the soil, or if it is very hard till lightly. If your soil is rocky, the seed will fall between rocks. Very rocky sites may need some top soil or compost added.

Sowing the seed

Now you're ready to seed. If you're using a seed mixture, mix it with about 8:1 volume ratio of slightly moist sand to seed. Or about a 5:1 volume ratio of MILORGANITE. This is about a 4-5 gal bucket, 1/3-1/2 full of carrier (sand or MILORGANITE) to 1 lb. of seed. This separates the seeds from each other, allows you to easily see where you've seeded, and uses seed sparingly so you don't run out before you've covered your area. Simply walk over the area pressing seeds onto the surface of the soil. Then cover with straw (wheat or pine needle straw is good), so you can still see the soil. THE SEEDS NEED TO HAVE LIGHT TO GERMINATE IN MOST CASES. If you're using individual varieties for garden plans or patterned seeding with a color palette or seeds, follow the instructions

on the package exactly. (Holland Wildflower Farm seed packages have detailed instructions with pertinent information about sowing time, germination temperature, seed pre-treatment, sowing depth, etc.). Press seed to soil or cover as directed. Cover seeded areas with wheat or pine straw to stabilize seed, hold moisture to the ground, and divert birds. Straw is especially critical to stabilize sloping areas and provides just the light coverage needed. **DO NOT COVER SEED WITH SOIL.**

Patiently wait for beautiful wildflowers.....

This is the hardest part because people expect immediate results. Remember that wildflowers germinate when the conditions are right. So you should expect germination

to occur at different times all during the first year whenever conditions are right for each variety. Also remember that many perennial wildflowers do not bloom the first year from seed. So patience will come in handy as you wait for Yarrow, Ox-eye Daisy, Purple Coneflower, Lance-leaf Coreopsis, New England Aster and others to show out the second year. A good policy: Don't be too quick to judge your success. *Ask for our seed at your favorite garden center or contact us at the address below so we may help you personally.*

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Multi Art Center's Children's Garden

Jacqui Savage, Coordinator of Children's Art at the Multi Art Center in Stillwater, sent the Oklahoma Horticultural Society a very nice thank you letter. The Oklahoma Horticultural Society recently donated \$500.00 to the Multi Art Center's Children's Garden. Brenda Sanders, one of our members was the consultant for this project.

Now that the construction is completed, they are now able to continue on with their plans. Our donation will be used to help purchase plants, seeds, garden tools and other garden accessories.

Ms. Savage says to tell everyone to "*please come by and see how your donation is helping make a dream a reality and thank you so much again*".

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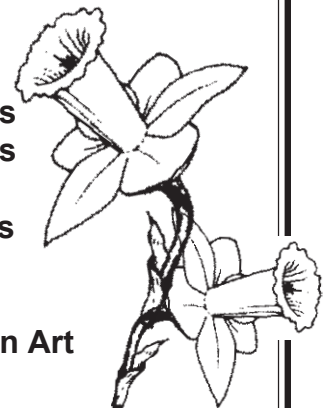
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OKLAHOMA GARDEN FESTIVAL ENJOYED BY ALL

by Sharon Beasley

The Oklahoma Garden Festival held at the Cox Convention Center is now behind us and it seems to have been enjoyed by all. Personally, I thought the layout for the festival was the best ever and the food in the food court was definitely better than ever. There have always been superb landscape designs to fire our desire to get back into our gardens and this year was no different.

As chairman of the OHS entry for the festival, imagine my surprise to discover that I had entered us into the judged, non-professional category instead of the educational category that we were in other years. (Don't even ask how that happened unless you like long stories). The design committee learned there is a big difference in the two the day we showed up to set up and found out we had a big open space all to ourselves instead of the space abutted by three other groups that we usually encounter. Can you imagine the difference in a design with neighbors in mind as opposed to being in the open. It is the difference between designing an island bed and designing a bed against the cyclone fence! After my nearly coming unhinged, we quickly got back on track.

I can't thank my design committee members enough. Thanks, JoAnne Vervinck, Vicky Michalik, and Teresa Hoehner. They were easy to work with, stayed calm and collected when we had to quickly adapt our garden design to an open, no tall fences, situation and they are also very creative people. Vicky and her children, Vanessa and Quentin, made the egg and sock sprout people, Vicky had made for her own yard the pot person that we confiscated to become our contrary Mary. Vicky and Teresa planned the educational table for our booth. Teresa created the little vegetable garden. JoAnne plotted the plant placement. JoAnne and I brought a carload or two of our personal belongings for adding to the design. A big thank you also goes to Nancy Fernandes for her darling flower ladies she created to be our "pretty maids all in a row." She made them much more elaborate than we had asked her to and they were perfect. Pat Steffens gave some of her time when we first started meeting and Warren Filley helped with some finishing touches on the last set up day.

Scott Connel was a special member of the design committee. Scott allowed us to use space in his warehouse that houses his Party Props business (which, by the way, is a blast to check out). That made it possible for us to actually put our design in place to see how it would look for real. Scott built the arbor for Mary's tea party, loaned us the picket fence that surrounded our

design, loaned us the over-sized strawberries (that he carved out of styrofoam), giant banana (he also made) and the sweet-faced chimps that rested in the tree and on the archway. (If you ever want a party out of the ordinary, rent some of his party props). Scott also transported most of our non-plant items and helped us set up. Hugh and Jennifer Scott provided their wee rock people for a rocking good accent.

For the plants we used, we owe a big thanks to Johnny Satterlee for loaning us trees and shrubs from his business, Satterlee Nursery, and to John Fluitt for loaning us plants from his landscape business, Garden Design Associates Inc. I had the task of keeping these many dollars worth of plants watered and I was very relieved when the event was over and the plants were still alive. Nancy Fernandes and I also contributed our personal plants to fill in. We only had to purchase a few spring bulbs to add a touch a spring.

Our scores for the design were 90, 67 and 62, an average not to write home about. But the most important score was the one in the form of comments from the visitors who seemed to be delighted with being taken back to their childhood. I heard the littlest visitors were ready to sit down with Mary to sip tea. Jeanie Spence took on the job of calling and scheduling people to man our entry. That always requires a lot of time, but she managed it. The following is a list of all the people who worked a shift:

Dean&WandaManderscheid	Juhree Bassett
Tempie Simmons	Brenda Sanders
Judy Alston	Jeanie Spence
Brent Suttles	Nancy Fernandes
Shirley McFarland	Wanda White
Beth Wagner	Ron McVey
Jacob Edingfield	Bob & Dorothy McLemore
Bob Corcoran	Ron & JoAnne Vervinck
Lynda Frizzell	Katheen Ryan
Shirley Kennedy	Patsy Lee
Pat Steffens	Olen & Teresa Thomas
Lyle & Eileen Henry	Julia Linger
Watzell Carlson	Scott & Cathy Connel
Janis Johnson	

Then there were the people who helped take everything down. Since I was having to deal with taking down my vendor booth and the OHS booth, I was a little frantic and may not remember everyone who helped, so I apologize in advance. They were: Teresa & Mark Hoehner, Ron & JoAnne Vervinck, Pat Lee, Vicky & Vanessa Michalik, Beth Wagner, Frank Arney and Ron Beasley.

This is a ton of people power to give something to the community and promote the Oklahoma Horticultural Society. Many thanks to all of you.

Start Potting and Dividing

those plants for this year's
"FESTIVAL IN THE PARK"

Saturday, June 7, 2003 is the day of this year's "Festival in the Park". This is the same day as our "Garden Tour for Connoisseurs". As you may remember, this festival has booths from plant-related groups, nurseries and greenhouses, plant judging, and numerous lectures. For the Oklahoma Horticultural Society, it is a fund-raiser and a chance to increase our membership.

We will be selling plants from our members. So if you have plants to divide, extra seedlings, or volunteers in your garden that you would like to donate, now is the time to get them potted. We ask that you label them, botanically, if possible and include a reasonable price. We usually raise a nice amount of money and all from donated plants! It is fun to donate and also to go and buy from our booth as well as others around the festival.

For questions about plants, or to volunteer to work, call Shirley Kennedy at 787-1897.

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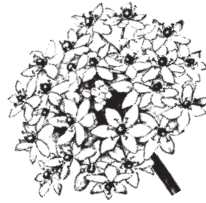
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2003 OHS Board of Directors

OKLAHOMA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY 2003 EVENTS

- > April 19 - A Spring Celebration; Yard Smart (lectures) and the Farmer's Market, OSU/OKC 8am - 1pm
- > April 22 - OHS Monthly Meeting: "Strawberries and Brambles", by Paul Johnson, Will Rogers Garden Building; 7 pm *Bring Snacks Please*
- > June 7 OHS Garden Tour for Connoisseurs; call Sharon Beasley at (405) 392-4727 or Jeanie Spence at (405) 751-8799 to volunteer
- > June 7 Festival in the Park; Will Rogers Park; Call Shirley Kennedy to work &/or with plants to donate (405) 787-1897
- > May 27 - OHS Monthly Meeting: TBA, Will Rogers Garden Bldg.; 7 pm *Bring Snacks Please*
- > June 24 - OHS Monthly Meeting: TBA, Will Rogers Garden Bldg.; 7 pm *Bring Snacks Please*
- > September 21 - OHS Bi-Annual Meeting & Program; OBGA in Stillwater; 1:00 pm
- > October 4 - Garden Gala; A one-day horticultural extravaganza; Oklahoma City Zoo
- > Jan. 29-Feb 1, 2004 - Oklahoma Garden Festival; Oklahoma City

For questions, check *the website* www.okhort.org
or email Vicky at tohightek@hotmail.com or call at (405) 330-9150



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- USING WILDFLOWER SEED IN THE LANDSCAPE
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- OKLAHOMA GARDEN FESTIVAL ENJOYED BY ALL
- START POTTING AND DIVIDING those plants.....
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- CALENDAR OF EVENTS
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