



State Recognizes Gardeners' Efforts

Parker County Master Gardener Association captured top honors at the recent Texas State Master Gardener Conference in College Station.

The association's efforts during 2005 were judged against 18 other medium-size clubs, a division dominated last year by Hood County Master Gardeners.

In the Publications category, PCMGA received first place for *The Real Dirt: A Gardening Handbook for Parker County*.

In Graphic Presentations, PCMGA's PowerPoint-supported *Successful Gardening in Parker County* class captured first place.

The Water-Wise Demonstration Garden at 604 N Main St in Weatherford earned third place in Projects.

Parker County's placement in the medium division is based on the number of actively participating members, said Deborah Martin, chairman of the TMGA Awards Committee.

"A medium county has 51 to 140 dues-paying members," she said. "This places Parker County within the largest group of master-gardener associations. To achieve recognition within that group is an accomplishment. It speaks to the dedication of its members and the extent of their effort."

Homer Babbitt, PCMGA president, said that the awards are validation that the club accomplishes a lot for its size - 60 members at last count -- and that the members have had "two very productive, back-to-back years."

"Competing in the small-association division last year, when there were only 30 members, PCMGA won first place in Publications for *A Botanical Guide for Chandor Gardens*, and first-place Association, an overall-quality category.

Martin added that independent judges awarded PCMGA 1,950 points out of a possible 2,000 points in both Graphic Presentation and Publication categories for the 2005 awards.

"The Texas Master Gardener Association congratulates them on their achievements and looks forward to their continued success," she said.

That's almost a sure thing. Parker County residents have purchased more than 600 copies of *Real Dirt*. *Successful Gardening in Parker County* will be offered in the spring, in conjunction with Weatherford ISD Continuing Education.

Meanwhile, PCMGA members are standing by to answer residents' questions from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday and Thursday at 817-598-6168.