



Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article July 02, 2018

Henderson County Master Gardener Association Hosts Neil Sperry

By Paula Winter



Your local Master Gardener Association, HCMGA, is thrilled to host Neil Sperry for their fall conference this year. "Facts and Fantasies of Texas Gardening, An Evening with Neil Sperry" will be held Thursday, October 4, 2018 at the Athens Country Club, from 6 – 8 pm. Tickets are \$50 each, including dinner, and go on sale July 1. A table can be reserved with the purchase of eight tickets. A limited number of tickets are available and they are expected to sell out early. The tickets will be sold only online at a safe and secure website: <https://hendersonmg.ejoinme.org/fallconference>, and assistance is available from a Master Gardener, if needed, for online ticket purchases. A receipt will be emailed immediately after purchase.

Sperry attended Texas A&M University and earned B.S and M.S degrees in horticulture from The Ohio State University. He hosted a radio program on KRLD 1080 AM for over 30 years. He now hosts a show on WBAP 820 AM radio. Additionally, he broadcasts to more than 50 stations statewide with his daily Plant Talk Texas and weekend Texas Lawn and Garden Hour.

Two of Sperry's books have become favorites of Texas gardeners. His *Complete Guide to Texas Gardening* (published 1982 with a second edition in 1991) has been popularly known as the "boot book," in reference to its cover art. It remained a primary reference for Texas gardeners until the publication of *Neil Sperry's Lone Star Gardening* in 2014. This 344-page book contains comprehensive plant listings and more than 800 photographs taken by Sperry, an avid photographer.

Sponsorships are also available for this event. There will be an event booklet and slide show on October 4 that will have ads from each sponsor, from Gold to Emerald (for more information on sponsorships, see the contact information at the end of this article). Recognition for all sponsors will appear as well on the HCMGA website: txmg.org/Hendersonmg; Facebook - @HCmastergardener and in our newsletter, "Inside Dirt". Any donation will be accepted and a tax exempt receipt will be issued. All ads need to be submitted by September 7, 2018.

For those who like to shop, the event will also include a silent auction, with wonderful items donated by local businesses. If you are a business interested in donating an item, please see the contact information at the end of this article.

This event is a fundraising event held each year to support the activities of HCMGA:

- DREAM Garden at East Texas Arboretum – HCMGA volunteer;
 - Children's Garden – Consultants available for schools and non-profit community gardens;
 - Speakers Bureau – Available to non-profit groups at no charge;
 - Greenhouse at Trinity Valley Community College – HCMGA volunteer and grow plants;
 - Library Series – Monthly series of free lectures on horticulture topics;
- Summer Series – Free to the public; guest speakers from all across the state;
- Booths at community events where information is handed out and questions answered;

- Provide weekly articles for local newspapers and publish a newsletter 6 times a year.

All of these activities are held free of charge to the community. In 2018, HCMGA was recognized by the Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Service for First Place, Outstanding Organization; First Place, Learn at the Library Series; and Second Place, Outstanding Individual – Jeanne Brown.

- Please consider supporting HCMGA by purchasing a ticket to our event, buying a silent auction item(s) and/or purchasing a sponsorship.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com or visit txmg.org/hendersonmg.