

**FURTHERING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DELIVERY
THROUGH MASTER GARDENER SPEAKERS BUREAUS**

A Thesis

by

JAYLA BROOK FRY

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

May 2012

Major Subject: Agriculture Leadership, Education, and Communication

Furthering Educational Program Delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee, Landry L. Lockett

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Major Subject: Agriculture Leadership, Education, and Communication

ABSTRACT

Furthering Educational Program Delivery
through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. (May 2012)

Jayla Brook Fry, B.S., Texas A&M University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Landry L. Lockett

Although the demand for public presentations exists, barriers prevent many Master Gardener Volunteers from participating in speaking events. This study identifies the perspectives of both County Extension Agents and Master Gardener Volunteers on effective Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. Characteristics and best practices of successful Speakers Bureaus are identified as well as barriers to their development and growth. A parallel mixed method study was designed to simultaneously gather qualitative and quantitative data. The results conclude for Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus to be successful, both agents and volunteers need to have a positive attitude and be supportive of the Speakers Bureau's efforts. Utilizing volunteer leadership and offering training are the two best practices that emerged from the data and are recommended to overcome the barriers for Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus.

DEDICATION

To my family Steven, Brook, and Ava Fry

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Although the demand for public presentations exists, barriers prevent many Master Gardener Volunteers from participating in speaking events. Mayfield and Theodori (2006) report that of the activities available, Master Gardener trainees were least likely to volunteer for speaking engagements. This study identifies the perspectives of both County Extension Agents and Master Gardener Volunteers on effective Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. Characteristics and best practices of successful Speakers Bureaus are identified as well as barriers to their development and growth.

Background and Literature Review

The mission of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service is to “improve the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high-quality, relevant education” (Texas AgriLife Extension Service, n.d., para. 3). The Texas Master Gardener Program was created to further the educational efforts of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service by developing volunteers who educate residents of local communities about horticulture. The volunteers also provide suggestions based on their previous experiences and on other community connections (Calman, 2010). Along with horticulture expertise, Master Gardeners bring skills in analysis, computer software, human relations, management, mass communication, public speaking, publishing, web design, and writing (Welsh, 2006).

This thesis follows the style of *Journal of Extension*.

The Master Gardener program began in the early 1970s in Washington State. County Extension Agent David Gibby envisioned a program for training volunteers to handle some of the horticulture questions that were flooding into County Extension offices. This innovation was so successful that Master Gardener programs are now available in all fifty states in the United States as well as several Canadian provinces (Welsh, n.d.).

The Master Gardener program in Texas was begun in 1978 by Dr. Sam Cotner. In 1987, Texas Extension expanded the program by hiring Dr. Doug Welsh as its statewide coordinator. To become certified, Master Gardener trainees in Texas must undergo a minimum of fifty hours of horticulture education and contribute at least fifty hours of volunteer service (Welsh, n.d.). Today, more than 6,000 volunteers participate in the Texas Master Gardener program in approximately 100 counties throughout the state. In 2010, these volunteers provided 494,997 hours of volunteer service to Texans (Fry, 2010).

Texas AgriLife Extension relies heavily on volunteer participation to help meet the needs of local communities. Culp, McKee, & Nestor (2007, para. 1) stated that “Extension professionals engage volunteers by involving them in a variety of roles and delegating to them responsibility for projects, programs, events, and activities.” Volunteers multiply the efforts of Extension faculty and staff. They can reach more people in the community in more ways than Extension can alone (Dodd & Lockett, 2010). Collins (2003) suggested that not only can volunteers reach more people, but they can also serve audiences that are often more diverse. Dodd and Lockett (2010) identified

other benefits that volunteers provide for Extension. Among them is the credibility they add to Extension programs because Master Gardeners are not paid employees of Extension and are often viewed as more objective and more sincere. Another plus is that volunteers often have more flexible time schedules than do Extension faculty, and they can devote more effort into developing educational programs that meet the needs of a target audience.

Master Gardeners are a recognized source of educational outreach for Extension. “In a survey of Youth Gardening Grant recipients from the National Gardening Association, Master Gardeners were reported by 43.6% of the respondents to be used as either a source for expert horticultural and gardening information or as a source of volunteer help to assist in school gardening activities” (DeMarco, Relf, & McDaniel, 1998, para. 1). Surveyed about the benefits they provide, Missouri Master Gardeners said that the greatest contribution was providing understanding about new experiences (Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, & Snyder, 2000). “Projects that most Master Gardener programs perform are individual phone calls, demonstration gardens, youth gardening, training other Master Gardeners, and speaking engagements” (Welsh, 2006, para. 7).

It is Extension’s responsibility to ensure that Master Gardeners have the ability and resources to provide effective horticulture education. Volunteers need training, supervision, and support to build confidence and to conduct educational programs (Collins, 2003). “Managing Master Volunteers is just as important as training them. Once Master Volunteers have completed their training, it is important to help them use

their subject matter knowledge and skills to educate new audiences” (Dodd & Lockett, 2009, p. 2).

In addition to training and supervising Master Gardener Volunteers, County Extension Agents contribute to several other outreach programs and volunteer groups to meet the public’s demand for education. Challenges faced by agents include heavy workloads, a 20.6% increase in the Texas population, and financial burdens caused by recent agency budget cuts. In the 2010–2011 biennium, the Extension budget was cut by 5%, resulting in the elimination of 94 full-time positions. An even bigger budget cut is expected in 2012–2013. Because County Extension Agents are expected to increase or at least sustain their programming efforts with fewer employees, the need for highly trained, competent volunteers is becoming increasingly urgent. The *Texas Master Gardener Annual Report* shows that Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus have greatly increased the number of people reached with gardening information. If expanded, these bureaus could extend the agency’s outreach efforts even further.

No recent publications have identified the characteristics of successful volunteer Speakers Bureaus or the barriers to implementing and expanding these programs. Some County Master Gardener groups already participate in Speakers Bureaus. Information about their successes and the limits to their growth can be useful for groups that lack Speakers Bureaus and can provide insight into barriers to the creation of this type of community outreach.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus and to understand the obstacles that limit their development and growth. Quantative and qualitative data were gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators, and Master Gardener Volunteers from across Texas. This information can be used to implement Speakers Bureaus in other groups, to extend the capabilities of existing Speakers Bureaus, and to help other types of Extension volunteer programs grow and develop.

Research Objectives

Three objectives were developed for this research:

- Identify the characteristics of successful Speakers Bureaus.
- Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus.
- Identify the barriers to development and growth of Speakers Bureaus.

Methodology

Quantative and qualitative data were collected through Web-based questionnaires to determine the characteristics and practices of successful Speakers Bureaus as well as the barriers to their establishment and growth. The results were reviewed and themes identified. A general explanation of a successful Speakers Bureau was developed along with discussions on possible limitations to its creation and growth.

Instrumentation

Questionnaires were created to determine the perceptions of volunteers and volunteer coordinators on the factors contributing to the success of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus and the actions needed to overcome barriers for their implementation and growth. Two questionnaires were developed for Master Gardener Coordinators. One questionnaire sought information from coordinators who have active Speakers Bureaus; the other targeted programs without Speakers Bureaus. Three questionnaires were prepared for Master Gardener Volunteers: One for volunteers who are active in a Speakers Bureau; a second for volunteers who have a Speakers Bureau but do not participate in it; and a third for volunteers whose Master Gardener county programs do not have Speakers Bureaus.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study can help maximize Master Gardener educational efforts, enabling volunteers to multiply the efforts of county Extension faculty and to reach more of the state's growing population. Because of recent legislative budget cuts, AgriLife Extension relies on volunteers more than ever to deliver high quality, research-based information. Little research has been conducted recently on ways to increase horticultural understanding and use and on the actions that can expand the growth of volunteer programs.

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made for this study:

- Respondents include County Extension faculty who have Master Gardener coordination duties.
- Respondents also include Certified Master Gardeners or Master Gardener Interns.

Limitations

Three limitations were identified for this study:

- Not all Master Gardener programs use the term *Speakers Bureaus* to describe volunteers giving public presentations. The use of this term may have caused some respondents to answer “no” to the question “Do you have a Speakers Bureau?”
- The terms *successful*, *effective*, and *presentation* were not defined for the respondents. Therefore, they could have had differing ideas about each term’s meaning. For example, *successful* could refer to the number of presentations given in a year. It could also mean the number of volunteers participating in the Speakers Bureau.
- The size of county (rural or urban) was not considered in the data analysis.

Definitions

Certified Master Gardener: A volunteer for the Texas AgriLife Extension Service who has completed 50 hours of horticultural training and has volunteered 50 hours of service delivering horticulture information.

County Extension Agent: An employee of Texas AgriLife Extension working at the local level to provide research-based information to the public. Sometimes referred to as

Master Gardener Coordinators, agents working with Master Gardener Programs are responsible for the educational effort by the volunteers.

Master Gardener Volunteer: A person trained by Texas AgriLife Extension to deliver horticulture information to local communities.

Presentation: An educational delivery tool that can include a demonstration, informal lecture, short course, speech, tour, or workshop.

Rural Extension County: A county served by Texas AgriLife Extension to meet the needs of residents in small communities.

Speakers Bureau: The designation of one or more Master Gardeners giving research-based horticultural information in the form of presentations to the public. The presentations can be demonstrations, hands-on activities, lectures, speeches, or workshops. They are prepared on topics that are either requested by recipients or chosen from a list of developed by the Master Gardener program. Often a committee will form to delegate the work on different aspects of preparing for, delivering, and evaluating a presentation. All work contributing to the educational effort is considered a part of a Speakers Bureau.

Master Gardener Intern: A volunteer for Texas AgriLife Extension who has completed the 50-hour educational requirement but not the service component to become a certified Master Gardener.

Urban Extension County: One of seven counties identified by Texas AgriLife Extension to receive educational programs developed to meet the specific needs of urban

populations. They are Bexar, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Bend, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis Counties.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The ever-increasing public demand for gardening information and assistance taxes Extension resources and reduces its ability to respond to requests for information (Grieshop & Rupley, 1984). One way to overcome the restricting effects of downsizing and limited budgets is to enlist qualified, highly trained volunteers to help fulfill Extension's mission (Rohs & Westerfield, 1996; Rohs, Stribling, & Westerfield, 2002). These constraints led to the creation of the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program. The Texas Master Gardener Program is a volunteer development program offered by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Master Gardeners further the mission of the Extension Service by providing horticulture education programs to residents of local communities. Master Gardeners must complete a minimum of fifty hours of education and contribute at least fifty hours of volunteer service. Among their most valuable contributions are answering gardening questions received by Extension offices, building and maintaining demonstrations for the public, and offering workshops, tours, and other educational programs for local residents. Along with horticulture expertise, Master Gardeners bring to Extension skills in analysis, computer software, human relations, management, mass communication, public speaking, publishing, web design, and writing (Welsh, 2006). Mayfield and Theodori (2006) reported that of all the ways that Master Gardener trainees can serve their communities, they are least likely to choose speaking engagements. "The teaching role, formal and informal, is one of the most significant contributions that volunteers make to the county and state Extension

programs.” (Bolton, 1992, Para. 4). The educational benefits that volunteers could provide to Extension through speaking engagements led to the purpose of this study.

The Master Gardener Program has been studied extensively throughout its forty-year history. Most of the related research has focused on:

- Managing volunteer programs and recruiting and motivating volunteers (Strong & Harder, 2011; Wolford, Cox, & Culp, 2001; Boyer, Waliczek, & Zajicek, 2002; Rohs, Stribling, & Westerfield, 2002; Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, & Snyder, 2000; Byrne & Caskey, 1985; Rohs & Westerfield, 1996,)
- Educational methods (VanDerZanden, Rost, & Eckel, 2002; Jeannette & Meyer, 2002; Stack 1997; VanDerZanden & Hilgert, 2002; Mayfield, Wingenbach, & Chalmers, 2006; VanDerZanden, 2001; Peronto & Murphy, 2009)
- Retaining volunteers (Marr, 1992; Moravec, 2006)

Little research has been conducted on the effectiveness of specific volunteer activities within the programs or the ways to increase volunteer participation and productivity in those activities. That research focuses mentoring (Phillips & Bradshaw 1999; Rogers, 1997), answering clientele questions (Meyer & Jarvis, 2003), and youth gardening (Dirks & Orvis 2005; DeMarco, Relf & McDaniels, 1998). Scarce research has been conducted on how volunteers successfully conduct educational programs, pointing to the need for increased knowledge in this area. The next section summarizes the current literature on the Master Gardener Program.

Recruiting and Motivating Master Gardener Volunteers

The aspect of Master Gardener programs that has been studied most recently and most frequently concerns recruiting and motivating volunteers. In research on Extension Master Volunteers, Strong and Harder (2011) and Wolford, Cox, and Culp (2001) determined that the reason that the volunteers initially choose to work with an Extension program is for personal benefit. They remain with the program for affiliation with others. Wolford et al. (2001) also learned that intrinsic rewards are stronger motivators than are extrinsic rewards. Boyer, Waliczek, and Zajicek (2002) found that personal benefits for Master Gardener Program volunteers include increases in physical activity, social activity, and self-esteem, and improvements in nutrition. Rohs, Stribling, and Westerfield (2002) agreed that the gain of personal benefits was the most important reason people become Master Gardeners. They added that the program provided an appealing status, flexible service opportunities, excellent educational training, and other rewards.

In 2000, Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, and Snyder reported several reasons that people have for volunteering in the Master Gardener Program. Of the reasons presented, the most important was to gain a new understanding of a topic of interest. This motive is followed closely in importance by the desire to help others and to gain career enhancement skills.

Byrne and Caskey (1985) studied Extension 4-H adult volunteers to determine what motivated them. They found that knowing that they did a good job was the volunteers' top motivating factor. Next in importance were receiving appreciation from a

4-H member, training to prepare them to conduct the service, appreciation by Extension staff, and reimbursement for expenses related to their service. Like Wolford et al. (2001), they found that volunteers were motivated more by intrinsic than extrinsic rewards.

Rohs and Westerfield (1996) studied the demographics of Georgia Master Gardeners to determine where to focus recruiting efforts. The researchers concluded that the majority of Master Gardener Volunteers had children and were female, married, and over the age of 55. Their annual household income was typically above \$50,000. Most volunteers had graduated from high school, and about 40% had attained higher levels of education. The researchers suggested that volunteers contribute to Master Gardener Programs for four reasons: to gain personal knowledge, to form relationships, to influence others and, to contribute to society.

To summarize the research on recruitment and motivation, volunteers for the Master Gardener program are most often drawn and retained by intrinsic rewards. Examples of intrinsic rewards are opportunities for volunteers to give back to their community and the appreciation received from people receiving their service, (Wolford, Cox, & Culp, 2001; Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, & Snyder, 2000; Byrne & Caskey, 1985; Rohs & Westerfield, 1996). Extrinsic rewards that draw volunteers to the program include the opportunity to influence others in their community, to enhance their careers, and to increase their status (Rohs, Stribling, & Westerfield, 2002; Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, & Snyder, 2000; Rohs & Westerfield, 1996). Volunteers are attracted and retained by the personal benefit realized (Strong & Harder, 2011 and Wolford, Cox, &

Culp, 2001; Boyer, Waliczek, & Zajicek, 2002; Rohs, Stribling, & Westerfield, 2002;), by the education offered by the Master Gardener program (Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, & Snyder, 2000; Byrne & Caskey, 1985; Rohs & Westerfield, 1996), and for the opportunities to affiliate with others (Strong & Harder, 2011; Wolford, Cox, & Culp, 2001; Rohs & Westerfield, 1996).

Training Master Gardener Volunteers

Master Gardener programs are continually seeking research on effective training practices. This demand is fueled by new technology being developed, decreases in Extension staff numbers and travel budgets that limits face-to-face training, and the need to reach potential Master Gardener Volunteers in innovative ways. Several training options have been researched, each with advantages and disadvantages.

An online training class for Master Gardeners was examined by VanDerZanden, Rost, and Eckel (2002). They found that the volunteers valued the flexibility offered by the online class for completing the course. The disadvantages were the users' variations in technology skills and their computers' lack of software capabilities, which prevented access by some to the video clips and animations. The researchers concluded that more work was needed to develop a high-quality online educational program for Master Gardeners.

Jeannette and Meyer (2002) compared the satisfaction levels of Master Gardener trainees in traditional face-to-face classes with those taking online classes. They found that "Students who can take the classroom course find less advantage in taking the course online. Students who are constrained by time and distance issues find the online

class a great opportunity and are more enthusiastic about taking the course online” (p.154). The authors also noted that students in the traditional class reported more technical frustrations, which may have influenced their preference for instructor-led classes. Another important finding was that “the methods in which the material is presented is less important than how the material is organized, presented and emphasized” (p. 155)

Stack (1997) examined traditional and distance learning methods for delivering Master Gardener training. The distance learning method used in the study was Interactive Television (ITV). Two groups watched recorded ITV sessions. Weekly quizzes revealed little difference in horticulture knowledge gained from the two types of instruction. Most participants were satisfied and indicated that they would take the class again if it consisted of a mixture of traditional and distance education classes. Stack did find that fewer ITV participants completed the required service hours to become certified Master Gardeners than did traditionally trained volunteers.

VanDerZanden and Hilgert (2002) studied two online Master Gardener training modules. A module administered in 1999 covered basic botany; the other, administered in 2000, focused on soil science. The researchers compared the findings on five components of the online modules: content, navigation, organization and presentation, technical issues, and user satisfaction (p. 297). The poor ratings for organization and user satisfaction in 1999 prompted changes to the 2000 module. VanDerZanden and Hilgerth learned that the video clips used in 1999 were not useful and eliminated them in 2000.

Mayfield, Wingenbach, and Chalmers (2006) researched the use of CD-ROMs to teach turfgrass management to Master Gardener as an alternative to traditional teaching methods. They used pre- and post-tests to compare the knowledge gained from traditional and CD-ROM classes. Post-test scores revealed that those trained by CD-ROM gained more knowledge in the interim between the pre- and post-tests. This was due in part to the participants' ability to review the material. The users of both teaching methods were equally satisfied. However, when asked about their preferences for future classes, the respondents favored traditional classes by far over training by CD-ROM.

Other research pertaining to Master Gardener training included using experienced Master Gardeners to teach new Master Gardeners, which could alleviate the burden on Extension staff and budgets. VanDerZanden (2001) conducted a study of Master Gardeners who attended a train-the-trainer workshop and later taught a class on the subject. The Master Gardeners were given retrospective post evaluations after the workshop and after the first class they conducted. The results of both evaluations indicated that leading a class made little difference in the Master Gardeners' view of their ability to conduct the training, manage the class, and perform effectively in the classroom. They did, however, show an increase in their confidence in answering questions from the audience after the training they conducted. An evaluation was also given to the Master Gardener Interns receiving instruction from the Master Gardeners. This evaluation revealed that the knowledge gained from the Master Gardeners who attended the train-the-trainer workshop did not differ significant from that presented by Extension Specialists, Horticulture Professors, and veteran Master Gardeners.

Peronto and Murphy (2009) examined the adoption of practices after Master Gardener training programs and the personal benefits to volunteers from the program's service component. They found that 92% of the surveyed population adopted six of the 19 skills taught in the training; 49% believed they benefited from their volunteer service by helping others; and 51% believed that they benefited via personal achievements in their own gardens.

As technology improves and budgets for trainers declines, nontraditional Master Gardener training courses are being used increasingly. Two studies showed the benefits of online Master Gardener training and the obstacles that should be addressed when it is offered (VanDerZanden, Rost, & Eckel, 2002; Jeannette & Meyer, 2002). Stack (1997) evaluated distance Master Gardener training by using Interactive Television, and VanDerZanden and Hilgert (2002) researched the use of online training modules for two basic topics. Mayfield, Wingenbach, and Chalmers (2006) studied the use of CD-ROM to train volunteers, and VanDerZanden (2001) evaluated a train-the-trainer program presented to Master Gardener Interns by experienced Master Gardeners. However, Peronto and Murphy (2009) analyzed the adoption of practices from traditional Master Gardener training. They found traditional Master Gardener training program are valuable because of the level of adoption of practices taught in the basic Master Gardener training program.

Retaining Master Gardener Volunteers

It is as equally important for Extension to retain experienced Master Gardeners as it is to train new ones. Because research indicates that personal benefit is a strong

motivator for volunteers (Strong & Harder, 2011; Wolford, Cox, & Culp, 2001; Boyer, Waliczek, & Zajicek, 2002; Rohs, Stribling, & Westerfield, 2002), it would stand to reason that offering continual educational opportunities would encourage continual service. Stouse and Marr (1992) suggested that contributing service also offers opportunities to learn. Moravec (2006) stated, “Continuing education programs not only disseminate research-based information, but also motivate Master Gardeners to serve their communities on a continued basis through Cooperative Extension's program” (para. 1). Moravec surveyed Master Gardeners to determine their continuing educational preferences, the topics that most interested them, their preferred delivery format, and the best times for them to attend continuing education classes. The results showed that interest in continuing education classes was high and that the topics preferred most were on horticulture. Based on frequency, the preferences for delivery formats were distributed evenly among lectures, field trips, and hands-on activities. The researcher noted that only one respondent suggested on-line training. The survey determined that local classes held on weekday afternoons were most preferable. The least preferred season was summer. The Master Gardener Coordinator used the survey results to plan the next continuing education course, and attendance was the best ever.

The studies by Stouse and Marr (1992) and Moravec (2006) suggest that offering continual education and opportunities for volunteer service are important ways to retain volunteers. Previous research found that education (Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, & Snyder, 2000; Byrne & Caskey, 1985; Rohs & Westerfield, 1996) and intrinsic rewards (Wolford, Cox, & Culp, 2001; Schrock, Meyer, Ascher, & Snyder, 2000; Byrne &

Caskey, 1985; Rohs & Westerfield, 1996) were motivators for people being recruited into the program. The findings on retaining volunteers align with those for recruitment.

Master Gardener Volunteer Activities

Because this study focused on a particular Master Gardener activity, it could be useful to investigate the findings of recent research on other Master Gardener activities. Relf and McDaniel (1994) showed that volunteers believed that training is a primary responsibility of Extension, but that the activities conducted by the Master Gardener Program should be handled by volunteers.

Phillips and Bradshaw (1999) and Rogers (1997) studied the use of Master Gardener mentors to retain volunteers. In each study, an informational meeting was held for mentors to learn what they would be expected to do. Each mentor was to contact the mentee before and multiple times throughout the Master Gardener Intern Training class. Master Gardener mentors would also be available for guidance and contact after the training class on an as-needed basis. Phillips and Bradshaw (1999) reported, “Drop-out rates for the three annual Master Gardener basic training programs prior to the Mentor program were 26%, 17%, and 27% for the years 1995, 1996, and 1997, respectively. Although the 1998 class in Pinellas County was one-third smaller than the previous years, the trainee drop-out rate for basic training program was 2%.” They also found that 25% of the mentees agreed that their mentor was the reason they continued in the program. Rogers found that the retention rate from his study rose from 50% to 75% after the mentor program was established.

Meyer and Jarvis (2003) studied a new way to answer individual questions from the public: via email. Technology enables volunteers to reach their clients more quickly and effectively. Meyer and Jarvis found that the “Ask a Master Gardener” email system allowed the public to ask questions on a more flexible time schedule and to receive personal responses that could be saved for future reference.

The Junior Master Gardener Program™ was studied by Dirks and Orvis (2005) to determine attitudes and knowledge about gardening practices of youths in public schools. The researchers reported that the program improved attitudes and increased knowledge. They also found that school gardens enhanced the learning experience.

DeMarco, Relf, and McDaniels (1998) examined youth gardening programs that were assisted by Master Gardeners. They found that 46.3% of the respondents had tapped Master Gardeners to increase teachers’ gardening knowledge and to volunteer in school gardens. The researchers suggested that schools not using Master Gardener assistance in their gardens were either unaware of the Master Gardener Program or lacked access to Master Gardeners.

Conclusion of Master Gardener Research

Extensive research on Master Gardener Programs has provided obvious benefits to their growth, development, and management. However, little research has been conducted on how to improve the performance of volunteers in extending knowledge to the public. Because studies show that disseminating knowledge to the public is the most important benefit provided by Master Gardeners (Rohs & Westerfield, 1996; Relf & McDaniels, 1994), identifying ways to better their knowledge-sharing abilities would

boost program effectiveness. Studying Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus may increase the impact that Extension has on the community and provide ways for Master Gardeners to gain new teaching skills.

Other Volunteer Research

Sandlin and St. Clair (2005) note in *Volunteers in Adult Literacy Education* that little research has been conducted on how to improve volunteer effectiveness and practices. The following section summarizes other volunteer research on utilizing volunteers as educators. The results are diverse, with only a slight overlap in identifying the need for volunteer training and supervision.

High schools in New Mexico have used volunteers for years to enhance their agriculture education efforts (Seevers & Rosencrans, 2001). Seevers and Rosencrans surveyed agriculture teachers to identify the benefits and limitations of using volunteers. They found that using volunteers afforded the teachers more time to focus on other aspects of their program; volunteers also added their expertise on some subjects that enhanced the learning experience. The limitations for agriculture volunteers were the amount of time needed to train and supervise them properly and their lack of knowledge/expertise about the program.

Kidd and Kidd (1997) studied characteristics of volunteer wildlife docents. They found that support from staff and peers are vital for maintaining the volunteers' involvement with educational programs at the wildlife center.

In 2000, Wu and Carter studied volunteer educators in an English as a Second Language program at the YWCA Princeton in New Jersey. They identified five steps for

developing volunteers: encourage professionalism, appoint leaders, supervise volunteers, create a fun environment, and provide flexible scheduling.

Volunteers are used extensively as tutors in adult literacy programs. Sandlin and St. Clair (2005) suggest that there are many ways that volunteers can be used and become more effective. One way is by serving as instructors. The researchers define instructors as people who can train and coordinate other volunteers, lead small group discussions, plan lessons, develop curricula, and revise resources. They go on to report that although training is offered, volunteers often believe that they lack the expertise or resources needed to do a good job.

Fenzel and Flippen (2006) studied the use of volunteer teachers in an alternative middle school for at-risk children from low-income households. They found that volunteer teachers with one to two years of experience were less able to engage students in learning activities than to correct behavioral problems. Fenzel and Flippen suggest that mentoring inexperienced teachers may increase their effectiveness.

Other studies on using volunteers as educational speakers found that the benefits include the expertise that they bring to a topic and the time that they free up for staff to focus on other projects (Seevers & Rosencrans, 2001). Caveats were that volunteers used in this capacity should be supported by employees and other volunteers (Kidd & Kidd 1997), that the volunteers should be trained to give educational speeches (Sandlin & St. Clair 2005), that they should be supervised (Wu & Carter 2000), and that they should be supported by leadership (Wu & Carter 2000) and mentoring (Fenzel & Flippen 2006).

Conclusion of Research

Extensive research has been conducted on the management of Master Gardener volunteer programs, their recruiting and training methods, and specific program activities. Other types of volunteer programs have identified the benefits of volunteers and have offered suggestions on how to support and supervise volunteer educators. Research on the characteristics of successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus, the practices that Master Gardeners adopt to improve their speaking abilities, and the barriers to the growth and development of Speakers Bureaus can serve as a launching point for the establishment and growth of Speakers Bureaus in other Master Gardener Programs.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The *2010 Texas Master Gardener Annual Report* shows that more people are reached by speaking engagements than by any other regularly conducted Master Gardener activity. Master Gardener volunteers delivered 2,360 presentations in 2010, reaching 193,858 people (Fry, 2010). Many Texas Master Gardener volunteers deliver successful educational presentations to the public. However, not all Master Gardener Programs offer this service. It is important to identify successful Speakers Bureaus, document practices that foster success, and recognize the barriers that hinder success so that Extension volunteers can contribute in ways that directly align with Extension's educational mission and will make the most impact for their service.

A parallel mixed method study was designed to simultaneously gather qualitative and quantitative data from Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. This research has determined the characteristics and practices of successful Speakers Bureaus and has identified limitations and barriers to the growth and development of Speakers Bureaus. Master Gardeners contribute to the mission of the Extension Service through horticulture education programs provided for citizens in local communities. Along with horticulture expertise, Master Gardeners bring additional skills to Extension, including expertise in analysis, computer software, human relations, management, mass communication, publishing, public speaking, Web design, and writing (Welsh, 2006). However, Mayfield, and Theodori (2006) found that of all activities available, Master Gardener trainees were least likely to volunteer for speaking engagements. Master Gardener

Programs have indicated that there is a demand for public presentations, but barriers prevent volunteers from participating in speaking events. “The teaching role is one of the most significant contributions that volunteers make to Extension programs” (Bolton, 1992, para. 4). This study was conducted because of the educational benefits that volunteers could provide Extension and the public through their speaking engagements.

This chapter will discuss the steps taken to understand successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. Explained in this chapter will be the research design, populations and samples, the instrumentation used to collect data, the processes implemented to determine validity and reliability of the instrument, the method of data collection, and lastly, the data analysis system used for this study.

Research Design

A parallel mixed method design was used to address the research problem. Creswell (2008) explained that the mixed method using both quantitative and qualitative data offers a more complete understanding than would either of these collection methods alone. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) described a parallel design as one that simultaneously gathers quantitative and qualitative data to answer questions related to research objectives. The data are then merged into a single unit to explain and interpret the findings. See Appendix V.

Population and Sample

Texas AgriLife Extension Agents and Texas Master Gardener Volunteers were the purposive population for this study. The sample used to identify County Extension Agents was a complete list of Texas Master Gardener programs made available by the

Texas Master Gardener state office. The 2011 list of County Extension Agents identified 89 Master Gardener programs. Sixty-six of these programs had a Speakers Bureau; 20 did not. No information was available about Speakers Bureaus for three programs. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) stated that a population size of 65 would require 56 participants to produce a reflective sample yielding a $\pm 5\%$ margin of error. County Extension Agents were numbered and alphabetized by their county name. Fifty-six agents were selected by using www.randomizer.org.

The sample of Master Gardener volunteers was taken from the Texas Master Gardener Association email distribution list. Although this list is not a complete representation of all Texas Master Gardeners, it is the most accurate and complete list available. Duplicate email addresses and non-Master Gardeners were removed from the list to prevent potential sources of frame error. There were 2,778 usable email addresses. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a population of 2,800 would require a sample of 338 to yield a $\pm 5\%$ margin of error. Three random samples of the volunteer email address list were taken. Two samples were used to test reliability and one was used to gather data for the research project.

Instrumentation

The data collection instruments (Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C) were chosen after a discussion with the Associate Department Head for Extension Horticulture and the Thesis Committee Chair. A questionnaire was selected to be the data collection instrument. To meet the three objectives of the study, County Extension Agents and Master Gardener Volunteers were asked both quantitative and qualitative

questions. The first objective was to describe successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The second objective was to identify best practices of Speakers Bureaus. The third objective focused on the limitations and barriers to establishing and growing Speakers Bureaus.

After reviewing several online survey services, the researcher determined that Qualtrics™ services were best suited for this study. The survey questions were entered into Qualtrics™ and reviewed by the Thesis Committee Members.

Validity

To establish validity for this research, a panel of experts reviewed the questionnaires for the agents and the volunteers. Two types of validity were determined: face validity and content validity. *Face validity* determines whether the questionnaire “appears to be valid” (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010, p. 228). *Content validity* ensures that the questions will in fact elicit the information needed to reach objectives designed for the study (Ary et al., 2010).

The panel of experts consisted of two Texas AgriLife Extension Specialists, two Texas A&M Faculty members (one in the Horticulture Department and one in the Agriculture Leadership Education and Communication Department), and the Associate Department Head for Extension Horticulture.

Reliability

Creswell (2008, p. 169) stated, “If scores are not reliable, they are not valid; scores need to be stable and consistent first before they can be meaningful.” Reliability was determined by conducting pilot tests for both the agent and volunteer instruments.

Reliability for the agent instrument was determined by a test-retest method using County Extension Agents from Florida ($n = 59$) and Arkansas ($n = 54$). The volunteer pilot was distributed to two groups of Texas Master Gardener Volunteers; one used a test-retest method and the other used an alternative form of reliability. The alternative form uses two versions of the same instrument that is administered simultaneously (Creswell, 2008, p.170).

Florida ($n = 59$) and Arkansas ($n = 54$) County Extension Agents were emailed a pre-notice from their State Master Gardener Coordinator (Appendix D and Appendix E) and an invitation to participate in the pilot Master Gardener Coordinator questionnaire (Appendix F and Appendix G). The pilot sample consisted of 113 participants who were identified by the Florida ($n = 59$) and Arkansas ($n = 54$) State Master Gardener Coordinator. Fifty-three responses were received within 48 hours after the original email invitation message was sent. Forty agents responded to the second questionnaire.

The sample to test reliability of the questionnaire for the volunteers was taken from the Texas Master Gardener Association email roster. There were 1,764 volunteer email addresses after duplicates were removed. This sample was split dichotomously to conduct two methods of reliability. The first method was sent to 882 volunteers, of which 325 completed surveys within 48 hours of receiving them (Appendix H). The retest was emailed to those who completed the first survey, asking them to take a second similar questionnaire. The retest was sent to 325 volunteers and completed by 113 volunteers (Appendix I). The second alternative method to test reliability resulted in 342 completed surveys. In the alternative method to test the reliability of the questionnaire,

the respondents were asked to immediately clarify their previous responses in the same questionnaire (Appendix J).

Response data were downloaded from the Qualtrics™ website into SPSS data analysis software. The Kuder-Richardson formula 20 (KR-20) test was used to analyze test-retest data; it yielded coefficients ranging from 0.71 to 0.98 ($n = 107$). The analysis found that the questionnaires for both County Extension Agents and Master Gardener Volunteers were reliable.

Institutional Review Board

Required materials were submitted to the Texas A&M Institutional Review Board for approval of this research project. After approval was granted, the instruments were distributed for data collection and review (Appendix K). An amendment to include a peer review session was filed and approved (Appendix L).

Data Collection Process

The County Extension Agent data collection began with a pre-notice email from the Associate Department Head for Extension Horticulture (Appendix M). Dillman (2007) recommends that the first point of contact be a pre-notice letter; it was emailed to the sample ($n = 76$) on August 24, 2011. The questionnaire inviting agents to participate in the research (Appendix N) was distributed electronically to the sample on August 30, 2011. The first reminder email excluded those who had already submitted the survey and was sent to the remaining County Extension Agents six days after the first questionnaire was sent (Appendix O). The final email reminder again removed those who had already

responded and was sent eight days later. See Table 1 for the distribution schedule for County Extension Agents.

Table 1

Distribution Schedule of Materials to County Extension Agents

Data Collection Activity	Medium	Date Sent
County Extension Agents		
Pre-notice message	email	8/24/2011
Questionnaire	email	8/30/2011
First reminder message	email	9/5/2011
Final reminder message	email	9/12/2011

The Master Gardener Volunteers questionnaire was split into two surveys because of an oversight that omitted the open-ended questions from the initial questionnaire. Dillman (2007) reported that surveys should be short and easy to complete to improve the response rate. Accordingly, the researcher decided to send the open-ended questions in a second follow-up questionnaire. The first volunteer questionnaire was emailed to the sample ($n = 338$) on October 7, 2011; the message explained the purpose of the research and included an invitation to participate (Appendix P). Two email reminders were sent. The first excluded those who had already submitted the survey and was distributed to the remaining Master Gardener Volunteers in the population five days after the first questionnaire was sent. The second email was sent eight days later to those who had not responded. Those who responded to the survey were removed to prevent duplicate answers from the same person (Appendix Q).

Once the data were received from the first survey, a follow-up survey asking for additional information was sent to those who responded to the first one (Appendix R). The follow-up questionnaire was distributed on October 26, 2011, with one follow-up on November 3, 2011. A non-response follow-up was sent with all information combined into one survey (Appendix S). Table 2 lists the distribution schedule for the volunteer questionnaires.

Quantative Data Analysis

The statistical analyses of both coordinator and volunteer responses were downloaded from Qualtrics™ using the .csv spreadsheets provided by Qualtrics™. The two volunteer questionnaires were combined to form a single data set, which was uploaded back into Qualtrics™ for analysis. All questions for agents and volunteers were either yes/no or Likert-type questions that were reported as frequency and percent.

Table 2

Distribution Schedule of Materials to Master Volunteers

Data Collection Activity	Medium	Date Sent
Master Gardener Volunteers		
Questionnaire	email	10/7/2011
Reminder message	email	10/12/2011
Reminder message	email	10/20/2011
Non-response	email	10/27/2011
Master Gardener Volunteers follow-up		
Questionnaire	email	10/26/2011
Reminder	email	11/3/2011

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analyzed following the steps outlined by Glasser and Straus (1999) to establish grounded theory. The sample was selected from a purposive population of County Extension Agents and Master Gardener Volunteers. These two groups were chosen because they align directly with the research problem and many Master Gardener Programs currently conduct successful presentations. The study had enough participants to provide a redundancy of responses to ensure data saturation. *Data saturation* occurs when “no new information is forthcoming” (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010, 464).

The first step was to code the data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaires. *Coding* includes “sorting words, sentences, phrases, and paragraphs”

from the data into categories (Dooley, 2007, p 37). Categories were established to interpret overarching themes. Credibility was established by the participants to determine if the data collected is believable. Dooley (2007, p. 38) stated, “Trustworthiness relates to the degree of confidence that the finding of the study represent the respondents and their context.” To address the issue of credibility and trustworthiness, the researcher utilized triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checks. Triangulation was established by gathering information from many sources. *Triangulation* is defined as using multiple sources to establish reliable information (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010). These sources included County Extension Agents, Volunteers, and a panel of stakeholders. A peer debriefing was conducted with the panel of stakeholders consisting of the research committee, County Extension Agents, and Master Gardener Volunteers. The peer debriefing was used to gain stakeholders’ perspectives on the research findings and to confirm the researcher’s conclusions (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010). To ensure that the information gathered would represent the entire Master Gardener Program, the panel included Horticulture Agents, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agents, and representatives from urban and rural counties. It was suggested in the peer debriefing to have the open-ended questions coded by an outside source. The data were coded individually by two people; the categories were compared; final categories were established; and the results from the panel were summarized.

A member check was conducted by sending a summary of the results to the peer debriefing panel and to all respondents who completed the Master Gardener Speakers Bureau questionnaire (Appendix T). A *member check* is used to confirm the “accuracy

and meaning” of the summarized data (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010, p 500). All members were asked to make corrections or additions to the summary if needed.

Appropriate and reasonable suggestions were incorporated in the findings. For example, a recommendation for Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus was to recruit volunteers with career or speaking experience. Although this may be a population on which to begin recruiting efforts, one volunteer pointed out that no experience is necessary as long as the volunteer is willing to learn. An unreasonable suggestion was that a Master Gardener program had to be presented near the attendees’ homes in order to get an audience.

Transferability relates the research results to new or other situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For this study, transferability was determined by using the county Master Gardener programs that did not have a Speakers Bureau. Programs without Speakers Bureaus were asked to participate in the member check to determine whether the summary clearly explained how to establish a successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureau.

Dependability is a tracking process to ensure that correct findings are relayed and to exclude researcher biases (Dooley, 2007). *Confirmability* ensures that the information can be traced back to its original source (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This issue was addressed in the peer debriefing by presenting original quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires. The qualitative data had been coded and it was recommended in the peer debriefing that the information be coded by an outside source to exclude researcher bias.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The 2010 *Texas Master Gardener Annual Report* shows that speaking engagements reach more people than any other regularly conducted Master Gardener activity. Master Gardener volunteers delivered 2,360 presentations that reached 193,858 Texans in 2010 (Fry, 2010). Many Texas Master Gardener volunteers deliver successful educational presentations to the public. However, not all Master Gardener Programs offer this service. Although there is a demand for public presentations, barriers prevent volunteers from participating in them. Mayfield and Theodori (2006) report that of all the ways that Master Gardener volunteers can serve their communities, they are least likely to choose speaking engagements. This study identifies the perspectives of County Extension Agents and Master Gardener volunteers on effective Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus.

Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from County Extension Agents and Master Gardener volunteers from across Texas. This information will be used to implement Speakers Bureaus in Master Gardener groups and extend the capabilities of existing Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The findings will also be offered to other Extension volunteer programs for their use.

The following objectives were developed for this research:

1. Characteristics of successful Speakers Bureaus were identified by County Extension Agents and Master Gardener Volunteers.

2. Best practices were identified for both volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus.
3. Barriers to the development and growth of Speakers Bureaus were identified.

Objective 1

Agent Findings

Objective 1 was to identify successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. A questionnaire asked agents to indicate their length of tenure with the Extension Service. The years of service were grouped in intervals from “less than 5” to “more than 31.” Table 3 summarizes the tenures of the respondents. The most frequent intervals are less than 5 years ($n = 17$) and 6 to 10 years ($n = 17$).

The agents were asked how long they have worked with the Master Gardener program. The intervals presented ranged from “less than 5” to “more than 31.” Table 4 summarizes the length of service with Master Gardeners; the most frequent was less than 5 years ($n = 29$).

Then the agents were asked to indicate the number of volunteers in their Master Gardener programs. The intervals presented ranged from “0–49” to “more than 600.” Table 5 summarizes the number of volunteers. The most frequent number of volunteers was 0–49 ($n = 31$).

Table 3

Longevity of Service by the Agent. ($n = 67$)

Years	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Less than 5	17	25
6–10	17	25
11–15	11	16
16–20	5	7
21–25	10	15
26–30	5	7
More than 31	2	3

Table 4

Longevity of Work With Master Gardeners. ($n = 67$)

Years	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Less than 5	29	43
6–10	20	30
11–15	16	24
16–20	1	1
21–25	1	1
26–30	0	0
More than 31	0	0

Table 5

Number of Volunteers in the County Master Gardener Program. ($n = 67$)

Number of volunteers	Coordinators	
	f	%
0–49	31	46
50–99	18	27
100–149	7	10
150–199	4	6
200–249	3	4
250–299	0	0
300–349	0	0
350–399	1	1
400–449	2	3
450–499	0	0
500–549	0	0
550–599	0	0
More than 600	1	1

The questionnaire split to focus on two samples by asking agents if they had a Speakers Bureau in their Master Gardener program. It was explained that for this research, a Speakers Bureau need not be a formal group; a single Master Gardener or a

group of volunteers giving public gardening presentations would be considered a Speakers Bureau. The number of agents indicating they do or do not have a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau is summarized in Table 6. Twenty-one percent said they lacked a Speakers Bureau in their county. Of the 21% without Speakers Bureaus, 79% indicated that they would like to have a Speakers Bureau in their program. Table 7 details this information.

The following information focuses on agents without Speakers Bureaus in their Master Gardener programs but indicated that they would like for their volunteers to provide this service.

Agents were asked if there were presentation requests they were unable to fill. Table 8 reflects that twelve agents said they had no unfilled requests for presentations. Agents were then asked if Speakers Bureau efforts fit into Extension's Strategic Plan. Table 9 shows that 100 percent of the agents believed that Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus do fit in Extension's Strategic Plan.

Table 6

Determination of a Speakers Bureau in the County Master Gardener Program. ($n = 66$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	52	79
No	14	21

Table 7

Determination to Have a Speakers Bureau. ($n = 15$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	9	60
No	6	40

Table 8

Number of Unfilled Presentations. ($n = 13$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	1	8
No	12	92

Table 9

Determination of the Speakers Bureau Fitting into Extension's Strategic Plan. ($n = 13$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	13	100
No	0	0

The next question asked agents how Speakers Bureau efforts fit into Extension's Strategic Plan. The results: Seven agents agreed that the efforts reached Extension's clientele; three said Speakers Bureaus promote Extension; and two indicated that Speakers Bureaus extend personnel. Each of the following was given as an answer by one agent respectively: Speakers Bureaus involve volunteers, promote the Master Gardener program, and fill gaps.

Agents answered the question, “What is the most important reason to have a Speakers Bureau?” Six agents said the top reason was to increase public education; four said it was to extend personnel. Two agents indicated that Speakers Bureaus promote Extension, and one said that they promote the Master Gardener program and develop expertise.

In response to the request to describe the benefit the Speakers Bureau would be to them, three agents said it would be time management for themselves; two said it would help with topics outside of their focus; two others said it would reach more people; and another two said it would extend agents’ outreach opportunities. One agent said that Speakers Bureaus serve as a backup for agents and as a local resource that would prevent having someone travel from outside the county.

Agents answered the question, “What would be the benefit of the Speakers Bureau to the volunteer?” thusly: Seven agents said Speakers Bureaus would benefit the volunteer by allowing for personal growth. Three agents indicated that volunteers would have more exposure to the community. One each gave these answers: Volunteers would have more opportunities to share knowledge, would provide relevant training, would gain an increased sense of accomplishment, and would improve their community leadership skills.

To the question “What would be the benefit of the Speakers Bureau to the clientele,” five agents indicated that hearing information from a different perspective or someone else’s viewpoint would benefit Extension’s clientele. Four said that the clients would increase knowledge. Two agents said that clients would be able to learn from

experienced gardeners and would gain local information. One agent responded that clients would be able to choose from a greater variety of programs.

The next question agents answered was, “What would be the benefit of the Speakers Bureau to the agency?” Four agents said that Speakers Bureaus could reach more people. Two said that Speakers Bureau efforts extend personnel and help market Extension. One agent indicated that the programs help market the Master Gardener program, one agent said their efforts help validate the agency, and one agent thought it would help address educational needs of the community.

Agents were asked, “What are the characteristics of successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus?” Four indicated that successful Speakers Bureaus have volunteers willing to give presentations. Three agents said Speakers Bureau volunteers are knowledgeable in horticulture topics. Two agents indicated that leadership and organization aid success. One agent suggested interest from the community for presentations.

Table 10

Number of Volunteers Participating in Their County Speakers Bureau. (n = 50)

Number of volunteers	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
2	1	2
3	2	4
4	3	6
5	3	6
6	2	4
7	4	8
8	1	2
9	2	4
10	9	18
11	2	4
12	2	4
14	2	4
15	6	12
16	1	2
20	2	4
More than 20	8	16

The information in the ensuing paragraphs focuses agents who have Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The questionnaire asked, “How many volunteers participated in the Speakers Bureau?” Table 10 indicates that nine counties have ten volunteers each, six counties have 15 volunteers each, and eight counties have more than twenty volunteers each in their Speakers Bureaus. However, 18 counties have fewer than ten volunteers in their Speakers Bureaus.

Agents answered how long there has been a Speakers Bureau in the Master Gardener Program (including the current year). Table 11 shows that twenty-two programs began giving presentations in the past five years, the most common period listed by respondents. Four agents indicated that they have been giving presentations for 16 to 20 years.

The number of presentations conducted per county is summarized in Table 12. Twelve agents said that their Speakers Bureau gives more than thirty presentations per year. Then agents answered how many unfilled presentations there were in a year. Agents with the fewest number of unfilled presentation requests was one ($n = 12$). The most unfilled requests listed was more than thirty ($n = 2$). Table 13 summarizes the results of unfilled presentation requests.

Table 11

Years a County Has Had a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau (Including This Year). ($n = 49$)

Years	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
0–5	22	45
6–10	19	39
11–15	4	8
16–20	4	8
21–25	0	0
26–30	0	0

Table 12

Number of Presentations Conducted by the County Speakers Bureau. ($n = 48$)

Number of presentations	Coordinators	
	f	%
2	1	2
4	1	2
5	1	2
7	2	4
8	4	8
10	8	17
12	2	4
15	3	6
17	1	2
19	1	2
20	8	17
22	1	2
24	1	2
30	2	4
More than 30	12	25

Notes: any number without a response was removed from the table

Table 13

Number of Unfilled Presentation Requests. (n = 39)

Requests unfilled	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
1	12	31
2	6	15
3	3	8
5	8	21
6	5	13
10	2	5
20	1	3
More than 30	2	5

Notes: any number without a response was removed from the table

Agents were asked if a person or group receiving a Speakers Bureau presentation requested another one. Ninety-eight percent indicated that they were asked by a person or group to present again. Table 14 summarizes the repeat requests.

Agents were asked if they assist with any of the coordination duties of the Speakers Bureau. Eighty-five percent said they did help coordinate their Speakers Bureau efforts. Table 15 lists the number of agents who assist with coordinating the Speakers' Bureau efforts and those who do not. Agents who help coordinate their Speaker Bureau were then asked how they assisted. This question listed several

coordination duties and asked the agents to check all that applied. Agents had the option of listing other duties not included in the answer choices. The assistance offered by the most agents was helping with reports ($n = 28$). Other duties were designing PowerPoint programs, assisting volunteers in putting talk together, helping with information, formulating topics, approving information, and offering resources. Table 16 describes the ways that agents help coordinate their Speakers Bureaus.

Table 14

Determination of Repeat Requests for a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau. ($n = 48$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	47	98
No	1	2

Table 15

Agents Who Assist With Coordination Duties of the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 40$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	34	85
No	6	15

Table 16

How Agents Assist With Coordination Duties of the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 145$)

Assistance	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Scheduling events	22	51
Matching volunteer(s) to groups making the request	24	56
Matching volunteer(s) to the topic requested	27	63
Help market	26	60
Help evaluate	15	35
Help report	28	65
Other	3	7

Agents were asked for their level of involvement with the Speakers Bureau. Most agents said they were neither involved nor uninvolved. However, they were available when the Speakers Bureau volunteers needed them ($n = 16$). Table 17 describes the level of involvement the coordinators have with their Speakers Bureaus. Then they were asked to describe ways they interact with their Speakers Bureau. Nineteen agents responded that they provide resources for presentation material. Sixteen said they help manage request for speakers. Eleven agents listed offering support and appreciation for their volunteers. Eight agents help design the presentation. Six offer assistance with evaluating and reporting. Four agents offer technical support, and another four help match volunteers to the appropriate request. Three agents interact through communication support. Two help promote and market the Speakers Bureau efforts and one agent provides feedback to the Speakers Bureau.

Agents were asked to describe characteristics of successful Speakers Bureau. The following is a list of the characteristics that agents seek and the number of agents who listed that as a characteristic of successful Speakers Bureaus that way: Volunteer's skills/attitudes (33), Subject matter (15), Organization (10), Extension minded (6), Communication skills (5), Self-managed (5), Repeat request (4), Leader (2), Evaluations and reports (2), Diversity of clients (1), Increase volunteers in Speakers Bureau (1), Able to understand their contribution (1), and Increase numbers to report (1).

Agents were asked how effective their Speakers Bureaus were in delivering Extension educational programs to the public. Thirteen percent ($n = 6$) said their Speakers Bureaus were ineffective; most ($n = 54$) said they were effective; and thirty-

one percent ($n = 15$) said their group was very effective. Table 18 shows the agents' perceptions of the effectiveness of their Speakers Bureau.

Table 17

Agent Level of Involvement With Their Speakers Bureau. ($n = 43$)

Involvement	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Uninvolved (I let them manage themselves)	5	12
Uninvolved (I approve what the volunteers have planned)	2	92
Neither Involved nor Uninvolved (I am available when they need me)	16	37
Involved (I help manage the Speakers Bureau and review presentation material)	14	33
Very Involved (I manage the Speakers Bureau activities and make some presentations)	6	14

Table 18

Effectiveness of the Speakers Bureau to Delivering Extension Educational Programs to the Public. ($n = 48$)

Effectiveness	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Ineffective	6	13
Ineffective	0	0
Neither Effective nor Ineffective	1	2
Effective	26	54
Very Effective	15	31

Agents were asked to rate the effectiveness of their Speakers Bureau in taking care of business internally and coordinating their group, followed by a request for their estimation of the importance having an active Master Gardener Speakers Bureau. Table 19 summarizes the effectiveness of internal coordination by the Speakers Bureau. Although five agents said their groups were very ineffective, most said their bureaus were effective ($n = 23$), and sixteen agents rated their volunteers as very effective. Most agents agreed that having a Speakers Bureau is either very important or extremely important. Table 20 describes the importance of the Speakers Bureau to the agent.

Table 19

Effectiveness of the Speakers Bureau to Internally Coordinate Business. ($n = 48$)

Effectiveness	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Ineffective	5	10
Ineffective	0	0
Neither Effective nor Ineffective	4	8
Effective	23	48
Very Effective	16	33

Table 20

Importance of the Speakers Bureau Within the Master Gardener Program. ($n = 48$)

Importance	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Not at all Important	0	0
Very Unimportant	1	2
Neither important nor Unimportant	4	8
Very Important	25	52
Extremely Important	18	38

Agents were asked if their volunteers assess the effectiveness of their Speakers Bureau presentation. Table 21 describes those programs that assess their effectiveness and those who do not. Sixty percent assess their efforts. Next the agents were asked how their volunteers assess the effectiveness of their Speakers Bureau presentations. Agents could check “all that apply” and/or choose to fill in an “other” option. The other responses: self-evaluation and presentation summary form, and five agents listed custom evaluation, practice run through, immediate feedback, word of mouth, and evaluation of speaker. Table 22 describes ways volunteers assess the effectiveness of their Speakers Bureau presentations.

Table 21

Speakers Bureaus That Assess Their Effectiveness. ($n = 48$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	29	60
No	19	40

Table 22

How Speakers Bureaus Presentations Are Assessed. ($n = 38$)

Evaluation methods	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes, through Extension's Customer	15	52
Satisfaction evaluation forms		
Yes, through Extension's Outcome	9	31
evaluation forms		
Other	14	48

The questionnaire asked agents whether they report the efforts of their Speakers Bureaus. Twenty-two percent said they do. Table 23 shows Speakers Bureaus that report their impact. Agents then indicated who received the reports. They could choose “all that apply” and/or fill in an “other” option. An “other” response: other stakeholders. Table 24 summarizes the reporting information.

Table 23

Agents Who Report the Efforts of Their Speakers Bureaus. ($n = 29$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	22	76
No	7	24

Table 24

Evaluation Methods for Reporting Information From Speakers Bureaus. ($n = 73$)

Evaluation methods	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
The TExAS reporting system	22	100
Master Gardener Annual Report	17	77
Commissioner's Court	20	91
Other	14	48

Volunteer Findings

The volunteer survey asked whether the county Master Gardener program had a Speakers Bureau. The pre-notice letter explained that Speakers Bureaus could be a formal committee or an informal group, or even an individual who gives public presentations covering horticulture and related topics. More volunteers ($n = 249$)

indicated that they have a Speakers Bureau than those who do not. Table 25 summarizes this information.

Table 25

Volunteers Who Have a Speakers Bureau in Their County. ($n = 270$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	249	75
No	98	25

This section will reveal the data from volunteers who have no Speakers Bureau in their county Master Gardener Program. The first question asked whether the volunteers would participate if there were a Speakers Bureau. The responses were split, with fifty-four percent saying they would participate and forty-six indicating they would not. Table 26 shows the results.

Then volunteers were asked if Speakers Bureaus were useful or important. Ninety-two percent said yes. The survey ended for the eight percent who viewed Speakers Bureaus as not important or useful. The answer tallies for this question are in

Table 26

Number of Volunteers That Would Participate If There Were a Speakers Bureau in Their County. ($n = 108$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	58	54
No	50	46

Table 27

Volunteers Who Believe Speakers Bureaus Are Important or Useful. ($n = 48$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	44	92
No	4	8

Those who found value in Speakers Bureaus were asked for their opinion on what characteristics describe a successful Speakers Bureau. Thirty-eight responded that the most important characteristic of a successful Speakers Bureau was knowledge. Twenty-five said the volunteers need presentation skills. Thirteen said a Speakers Bureau should offer a variety of topics. Ten thought there should be enough volunteers to respond effectively to the requests. Seven believed the Speakers Bureau should be

organized. Four valued marketing most. Two said they should have good reference material and another two said the Speakers Bureau needs to offer a variety of times for their presentations. One said a successful Speakers Bureau should have interesting slides, another said the Speakers Bureau should have support, someone else said “canned” presentations would help, one said a variety of venues is needed, and one said that the bureau should offer a consistent message.

The questionnaire for counties with Speakers Bureaus also split the agents into groups of those who participate in the Speakers Bureau and those who do not. Most respondents do not participate in their County Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus ($n = 177$). Table 28 indicates the participation level of the volunteers in their county Speakers Bureaus.

Table 28

Participation in the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 296$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	119	40
No	177	60

The following questions are representative of those who do not participate in their county Speakers Bureaus. Volunteers were asked if they would like to participate in the Speakers Bureau. Table 29 indicates that seventy-nine percent would not. This group was then asked if Speakers Bureaus are important or useful. Table 30 indicates that all respondents agreed that Speakers Bureaus are important or useful.

Table 29

Interest in Participating in a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau. ($n = 173$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	37	21
No	136	79

Table 30

Volunteers Who Think Speakers Bureaus Are Important or Useful. ($n = 136$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	136	100
No	0	0

Volunteers were asked what characteristics describe successful Speakers Bureaus. Fifty-one specified knowledge of the subject matter. Fifty-one said the presenter should have good presentation skills. Thirty-three volunteers said a bureau should offer a variety of topics. Thirteen responded that leadership and organization are vital for success. Eight said enough speakers should be available and another eight said support material was needed. Seven said the program should be marketed and seven others valued training. Six responded that there must be requests from the public for the Speakers Bureau to be successful. Five said the Speakers Bureau should have equipment. One volunteer each chose these characteristics: the Speakers Bureau must promote the Master Gardener Program, the presentations should be evaluated, “canned” presentations are helpful, and different presentation styles should be offered.

Volunteers were asked if feedback was given from the Speakers Bureau’s presentations. Table 31 reveals that sixty-nine percent of Speakers Bureaus give feedback. Those who received no feedback were asked if they would like to have it. Table 32 indicates that most want feedback ($n = 46$). The questionnaire ended for those who did not want feedback. The volunteers who wanted feedback were asked if they found it interesting or helpful. Table 33 shows most did find it interesting or helpful ($n = 133$).

Table 31

Feedback Given From Presentations by the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 148$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	102	69
No	46	31

Table 32

Volunteers Who Would Like Feedback From the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 59$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	46	78
No	13	22

Table 33

Volunteers Who Find Speakers Bureaus Reports Interesting or Helpful. ($n = 138$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	133	96
No	5	4

The information below is from volunteers who participate in their County Master Gardener Speakers Bureau. Their first question was, “What is your role in the Speakers Bureau?” The volunteers were asked to “check all that apply.” They also had an option to add an “other” response. The “other” responses were photographer, past committee chair, help with JMG program, facilitator, attendee as needed, assistant at presentations, managing material, handouts, user, report hours and contacts, print tri folds. Table 34 summarizes the volunteers’ roles in Speakers Bureaus.

Table 34

Roles in the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 165$)

Role	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Researcher	46	38
Presentation Preparation	75	63
Manager/Committee Chair	15	13
Scheduler	16	13
Other	13	11

Volunteers were asked what topics their Speakers Bureau offered. Below are the topics listed and in parentheses are the numbers of volunteers checking each: Rainwater harvesting (40), Vegetable gardening (34), Roses (31), Many (25), Composting (24),

Earth-Kind™ excluding roses (23), Landscaping (22), Propagation (21), Trees (21), Butterfly and birds (25), Herbs (21), Container gardening (19), Entomology (18), Specialty gardens (17), Irrigation (14), Plants for area (14), Native plants (13), General horticulture/ gardening (11), Square foot gardening (10), Water conservation (10), What is requested (10), Soil (8), Pruning (8), Xeriscaping (6), Pest management (6), Perennials (6), Flowers (plants in general) (6), Turf (6), Succulents (6), Not sure (5), Grass (5), Citrus (4), Raised beds (4), JMG (4), Gardening with kids (4), Drought (4), Vermicomposting (3), Grafting (3), Texas Superstars® (3), African violets (3), Going green (3), Wildflowers (3), Shade (3), Poisonous plants (3), Non native (3), Lawn (3), Daylilies (2), Oak wilt (2), IPM (2), Bulbs (2), Pollination (2), Tomatoes (2), Online resources (2), Snakes (2), Weed id (2), Protection from frost (1), Senior gardening (1), Watershed (1), Forestry (1), Arboretum (1), Texas invasive (1), History of spices (1), Shrubs (1), Edible flowers (1), Hardscaping (1), Fertilization (1), Photography (1), Tools (1), Orchids (1), Irises (1), Plant history (1), Grey water (1), Holding beds (1), Therapy (1), Garden art (1), Mulch (1), New plants (1), Garden tour (1), Pass-along plants (1), Tropicals (1), Plant selection (1), Color (1), and Arrangements (1).

Volunteer presenters were asked what style of presentation they offer. They could check all that apply and fill in an “other” option if applicable. Two responded that they offer PowerPoint presentations, two said they staff booths, and each of the following was chosen by one volunteer: tables at events, training for speakers, classroom, and public fairs. Table 35 summarizes the styles of presentations Speakers Bureaus offer.

Next, the volunteers were asked how their Speakers Bureau communicates with its clientele. Respondents could check “all that apply” as well as enter an “other” option. The “others” written in were newsletter, harvest festival, and garden clubs. Two listed website. Table 36 describes their communication efforts.

Table 35

Style of Presentations. ($n = 345$)

Style	Volunteers	
	<i>F</i>	%
Lecture/Speech	122	100
Demonstration	110	90
Workshop/Hands-on	104	85
Other	9	7

Table 36

Speakers Bureaus Communication Efforts. ($n = 206$)

Communication	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.)	78	66
Word of mouth	100	85
Other, please explain	28	24

Volunteers were asked, “What is the most important reason to have a Speakers Bureau?” Seventy-five volunteers said the top reason is to educate. Nine said it is to promote the Master Gardener Program. Eight listed service. Five ranked providing resources the highest and another five chose assisting the agent or agency. Other answers given by one person each were for personal education, to provide immediate feedback to questions, and to generate revenue for the Master Gardener Program.

Volunteers who participated in the Speakers Bureau were asked to denote the characteristics that would make a Speakers Bureau successful. Knowledge of subject matter was reported by thirty-three respondents. Eighteen said that a Speakers Bureau should meet the needs of the public. Seventeen reported that a variety of topics should be offered; an equal number said willing volunteers to serve are needed. Fourteen said advertising was important to success and another fourteen said the bureau should offer a

variety of teaching methods. Listed by thirteen respondents was leadership. Ten responded that speaking skills or experience were important. Nine said having a positive attitude was important. Eight named training and another eight said support from the agent was critical. Four responded that those participating should be available to give presentations and another four said confidence was important. Two said that the bureau needs to promote the agency; another two said evaluations should be given at the presentations. Two said that charging a reasonable fee was critical. One said receiving repeat requests was important and another volunteer ranked collaboration within the program as important.

Those who participate in the Speakers Bureau were asked to rate the efforts of the Speakers Bureau. Table 37 indicates that sixty-two percent believed that their Speakers Bureaus were effective. Interestingly, eight percent rated their Speakers Bureaus as very ineffective. A follow-up question asked the volunteers to indicate how they would like their Speakers Bureau to be. Table 38 indicates that sixty-nine percent want the Speakers Bureau efforts to be very effective.

Table 37

Efforts of the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 119$)

Effectiveness	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Ineffective	10	8
Ineffective	3	3
Neither Effective nor Ineffective	11	9
Effective	74	62
Very Effective	21	18

Table 38

Where Volunteers Would Like the Efforts of the Speakers Bureau to Be. ($n = 117$)

Effectiveness	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Ineffective	11	9
Ineffective	0	0
Neither Effective nor Ineffective	0	0
Effective	25	21
Very Effective	81	69

Speakers Bureau participants were asked if they were trained for their work with the Speakers Bureau. Table 39 indicate that fifty-four percent ($n = 66$) said they did have training. Those not trained were asked if they thought training would have been helpful. Sixty-seven percent said training would have helped. Table 40 shows these results.

Table 39

Volunteers Who Participated in Training for the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 123$)

	Volunteer	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	66	54
No	57	46

Table 40

Volunteers Who Think Training Would Have Helped. ($n = 55$)

	Volunteer	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	37	67
No	18	33

Participants not trained were asked to indicate the type of training they thought would have helped. Learning how to use multimedia equipment would have helped

seven of the volunteers. Six wanted to learn public speaking skills. Three said practicing or having someone review the presentations would be beneficial. Two wanted help preparing handouts. One volunteer each gave these responses: resources, knowing how to prepare an outline for the talk, instructions on how to incorporate logos in the presentation, and ready-made presentations.

Volunteers who did participate in training were asked to indicate the type of training and who offered it. Twenty-three received training from Extension in a particular subject. Twenty learned speaking skills from career experiences. Fifteen were instructed by other Master Gardeners on how to use multimedia equipment. Eleven learned speaking skills from other sources outside Extension, such as Toastmasters. Eight had practiced to give presentations. Five worked with a mentor. Three learned subject matter outside Extension. One learned by observation.

The researcher wanted to know how the Speakers Bureaus had benefited the volunteers. Thirty-three said they gained personal learning. Twenty benefited by meeting new people. Thirteen said they enjoyed speaking. Seven responded that they made a difference. Four benefited from the organization of the bureau, and four others earned recertification hours for the Master Gardener Program. Two said they were able to promote the Master Gardener Program. One liked to help others speak; another enjoyed collaborating with other organizations.

Next, volunteers were asked, "What is the benefit of the Speakers Bureau to the agent?" Twenty-six volunteers feel that the Speakers Bureau give the agent more flexibility to do other work. Twenty said the bureau offers significant educational

benefits. Seventeen responded that the Speakers Bureaus can reach more people. Nine said they promote Extension. Seven said the bureau serves as a resource for the agent. Six responded that they can promote the Master Gardener Program. One said the bureau helps with public relations and another said the agent is helped by providing the volunteers with recertification hours for the Master Gardener Program.

Then, volunteers were asked what benefit the Speakers Bureau provided the client. An overwhelming amount of volunteers (sixty-one) said the Speakers Bureau provided the client with knowledge, education, or information. Eight said they provided the client with resources. Seven said the bureau offered the client free or low-cost programs. Three said they offered various topics. Two responded that this was an opportunity to teach the clients about Extension. One said the client could learn about the Master Gardener Program. Another volunteer responded that the bureau offered quality speakers; someone else listed the prevention of gardening mistakes, and another said the bureau offered a live person to answer questions.

Finally, volunteers were asked how the Speakers Bureaus benefited the agency. Twenty-four said the bureau educated the community. Twenty-three said it promoted the Extension Service. Twenty-two said the bureau offered outreach to the public. Seven noted the time saved for the agent. Five responded that the Speakers Bureau broadens the Extension staff. Two said the Speakers Bureau saves Extension money.

Objective 2

Agent Findings

Objective 2 was to discover the best practices for a successful Speakers Bureau. Agents without Speakers Bureaus were asked what would be needed to prepare volunteers to participate in a Speakers Bureau. Four agents suggest that presentation skills would be helpful. Two agents said that volunteers need subject matter expertise as well as the ability to create a presentation. The following answers were given by one agent each: opportunities for the volunteer to practice, prepared presentation, required initial training, plenty of volunteers and technology training.

Agents with Speakers Bureaus were asked what style of presentation their volunteers offer. They could check all of the choices that applied and/or write in an “other” option. The “other” choices provided by the agents were garden educational tours, Q and A, and Master Gardener program. Table 41 describes the styles of presentations that Texas Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus offer. Agents were then asked what topics their Speakers Bureau cover. Below is a list of topics and the number of agents whose Speakers Bureaus offered the topic:

Rainwater harvesting (25), Landscape (24), Miscellaneous plants (22), Propagation/Grafting (20), Irrigation (20), Vegetables (19), Roses (15), Earth-Kind™ (14), Herbs (13), Entomology (13), Fruit (12), Container gardening (11), General horticulture and gardening (9), Butterfly gardening (9), Trees (8), JMG/Youth (8), Birds (6), Soil (5), Vermiculture (4), Turf/Grasses (4), Water Conservation (3), Organic (3),

Cactus and Succulents (2), Photography (2), Pruning (1), Weed Management (1), Canning (1), Farmer’s Markets (1), Texas Super Stars (1), and Snakes (1)

Table 41

Style of Presentation the Speakers Bureau Offer. ($n = 139$)

Style	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Lecture/Speech	50	100
Demonstration	42	84
Workshop/Hands-on	44	88
Other	3	6

Agents responded to the question, “How many hours does the Speakers bureau spend on developing new presentations?” Table 42 indicates that most spend less than three hours developing new presentations ($n = 17$), whereas some groups spend more than ten hours ($n = 11$). It was important to know how the Speakers Bureaus communicate with clientele. This was asked as “check all that apply” with an option to write in other information. Other methods of communication recommended by the agents were brochure (4), Internet (3), print (2), hotline (1), and partnership (1). Table 43 summarizes the rest of the communication methods, with word of mouth being the communication method used most often.

Table 42

Number of Hours Speakers Bureau Spend on Developing New Presentations. ($n = 48$)

Hours	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
0–3	17	35
4–6	12	25
7–9	8	17
More than 10	11	23

Table 43

Communication Methods About Educational Opportunities by the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 91$)

Communication Method	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Purposeful Marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, e-mail, etc.)	34	71
Word of mouth	44	92
Other	13	27

The researcher asked, “Are volunteers recruited to participate in the Speakers Bureau?” Table 44 shows that eighty-two percent indicate that they do recruit

participants; eighteen percent do not. Agents who recruit volunteers to participate in the Speakers Bureau were asked the characteristics they sought for this activity. Thirty-six agents wanted volunteers with knowledge about specific subject matter. Twenty agents pursued volunteers who had demonstrated speaking or presentation skills. Twelve agents desired willingness and enthusiasm or passion from volunteers. Eight agents felt experience was a recruitable quality. Another eight indicated that a volunteer should have a clear understanding of Extension's mission and should offer factual information. Seven agents looked for confident volunteers. Six agents wanted volunteers with warm people skills. Four agents value organizational skills; two agents listed trustworthiness and dependability. One agent wanted volunteers with technical skills and one wanted a diverse group of speakers.

Table 44

Recruitment of Volunteers to Participate in the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 49$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	40	82
No	9	18

Table 45 reveals that most agents were neither involved nor uninvolved ($n = 16$) in their Speakers Bureaus. Some agents stated that “they were available when the Speakers Bureau volunteers needed them.” Next they were asked to describe ways they

interact with their Speakers Bureau. Nineteen agents responded that they provide resources for presentation material. Sixteen said they help manage requests for speakers. Eleven agents said they offer support and appreciation for their volunteers. Eight agents help design the presentation. Six offer assistance with evaluating and reporting. Four agents offer technical support and another four help match volunteers to the appropriate request. Three agents interact by supporting communication efforts. Two help promote and market the Speakers Bureau efforts and one agent provides feed back to their Speakers Bureau. Table 46 shows that thirty agents review the presentation material and eighteen did not.

Fifty-nine percent of agents offer training for volunteers to participate in the Speakers Bureau. Table 47 summarizes this information. Those who offer training were asked to select all that apply from a list of training options. They were also given the option to fill in an “other” choice. The other options that were identified are: train where resources are available, representing Master Gardeners and AgriLife Extension, and two agents suggested each of the following: specialist training, projectors and lap tops, reporting and evaluating efforts. Table 48 describes training offered to the volunteers.

Table 45

Involvement of the Agent in the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 43$)

Involvement	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Uninvolved (I let them manage themselves)	5	12
Uninvolved (I approve what the volunteers have planned)	2	92
Neither Involved nor Uninvolved (I am available when they need me)	16	37
Involved (I help manage the Speakers Bureau and review presentation material)	14	33
Very Involved (I manage the Speakers Bureau activities and make some presentations)	6	14

Table 46

Agents Who Review Speakers Bureau Presentation Material. ($n = 48$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	30	63
No	18	38

Table 47

Training Offered to Prepare Volunteers to Give Speakers Bureau Presentations. ($n = 49$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	29	59
No	20	41

Table 48

Training Offered to Master Gardeners to Become Speakers Bureau Members. ($n = 87$)

Training/Process	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Power point skills	25	89
Presentation skills	25	89
Research skills	17	61
Evaluation process	15	54
Other	5	18

Agents were given a list to choose all that apply about the type of equipment their Speakers Bureau used. There was an “other” option where they could list any other equipment their groups used. The other items identified are: demonstration materials, web, speakers, laser pointer, and HD camera. Table 49 describes the equipment volunteers use in their Speakers Bureau.

Table 49

Multi-media Equipment Used by the Speakers Bureaus. ($n = 129$)

Equipment	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Computer	40	95
Projector	42	100
TV/DVD	16	38
Microphone	26	62
Other	5	12

Volunteer Findings

Volunteers were asked how their Speakers Bureau communicates with their clientele. The respondents could check all the choices that applied or fill in an “other” option. The write-in communication methods included newsletter, harvest festival, and garden clubs. Two wrote in website. Table 50 describes communication methods for Speakers Bureaus.

Table 50

Communication Methods for Speakers Bureaus. ($n = 206$)

Communication	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Purposeful marketing (radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.)	78	66
Word of mouth	100	85
Other, please explain	28	24

Master Gardener volunteers who participate in their county Speakers Bureaus were asked if they assess their presentations. Table 51 shows that seventy-four percent assess the effectiveness of their presentations. If volunteers assess the effectiveness of their presentations, they were asked how they assess their presentation. Table 52 indicates customer satisfaction evaluations are used most often ($n = 63$), but a com

Table 51

Volunteers Who Assess the Effectiveness of Their Presentations. ($n = 121$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	90	74
No	31	26

Table 52

Ways Volunteers Evaluate Their Presentations. ($n = 114$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Communication		
Customer Satisfaction Evaluation	63	70
Extension Outcome Evaluation	29	32
Other, please explain	22	24

Notes: audience reactions (5), repeat invitation (2), participants comments (6), self evaluations (3), discuss with other leaders, attendance

Volunteers were asked if they report the results of their assessments. Table 53 shows sixty percent report their results and forty do not. Volunteers were then asked who they share the results of their evaluations with. Most share the results with their agent ($n = 44$). Other people their evaluations are shared with are Speakers Bureau Chair, County

Officials, others in the Extension Service, the speaker, Master Gardener Board, anyone interested. Table 54 describes who volunteers share their reports with.

Table 53

Volunteers Who Report Their Evaluation Efforts. ($n = 88$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	53	60
No	35	40

Table 54

Volunteers Share Results of the Assessments. ($n = 113$)

Results of assessments	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Agent	44	83
Others in the Speakers Bureau	31	58
Others in the Master Gardener Program	29	55
Other	9	17

Objective 3

Agent Findings

Objective 3 was to identify the barriers to the development and growth of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. Agents who did not want a Speakers Bureau were asked an open-ended question about why they were not interested. Three of the six respondents said they did not have enough volunteers. Two indicated that they were not interested in having a Speakers Bureau. Two said they did not know enough about Speakers Bureaus. Two lacked opportunities to present. One said that the volunteers in the group were not interested in a Speakers Bureau. One indicated that the population of their county was too small and one said that there was not a demand for information.

The agents who did not have a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau but wanted one were asked what was keeping them from having a Speakers Bureau. Six responded that the volunteers lacked interest. Four said their program did not have enough volunteers. Three responded that there was a lack of knowledge, and the following answers were given by one agent each: small population, lack of demand needing information, and lack of leadership.

Agents wanting a Speakers Bureau were asked what barriers they foresaw in establishing one. Nine agents said that they needed more volunteers who are willing to participate. The need for volunteers to be available to speak was the response of four agents. One agent said volunteers' lack of confidence would need to be overcome and another said the program needed more volunteers to establish a Speakers Bureau.

Agents who want a Speakers Bureau were asked what barriers they foresaw in growing a Speakers Bureau. Six agents said the lack willing volunteers would hinder the growth of a Speakers Bureau. Four agents were hampered by lack of time. Two indicated that there were too few volunteers in their program to grow a Speakers Bureau. One agent listed a lack of confidence and another lacked requests.

Agents were asked if they would like to have more volunteers participate in their Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. Table 55 indicates that ninety-two percent wanted more volunteers participating in the Speakers Bureau. Agents were asked if they recruit volunteers to participate in the Speakers Bureau. Table 56 shows that eighty-two percent indicate that they do recruit participants and eighteen percent do not.

Table 55

Agents Who Would like More Volunteers in the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 48$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	44	92
No	4	8

Table 56

Agents Who Recruit Volunteers to Participate in the Speakers Bureau. ($n = 49$)

	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	40	82
No	9	18

Agents were asked how effective their Speakers Bureau was at delivering Extension educational programs to the public. Thirteen percent ($n = 6$) said their Speakers Bureau was ineffective; most ($n = 54$) said they were effective; and thirty-one percent ($n = 15$) said their group was very effective. Table 57 summarizes the results of Speakers Bureau effectiveness. Another question focused on the Speakers Bureau's ability to take care of business internally and coordinate the group. Table 58 indicates that five agents rated their groups as very ineffective; however, most ($n = 23$) said their groups were effective.

Table 57

Speakers Bureau Effectiveness. ($n = 48$)

Effectiveness	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Ineffective	6	13
Ineffective	0	0
Neither Effective nor Ineffective	1	2
Effective	26	54
Very Effective	15	31

Table 58

Effectiveness of the Speakers Bureau to Internally Take Care of Business. ($n = 48$)

Effectiveness	Coordinators	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very Ineffective	5	10
Ineffective	0	0
Neither Effective nor Ineffective	4	8
Effective	23	48
Very Effective	16	33

Asked what barriers they faced when beginning their Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus, sixteen agents responded that their greatest challenge was finding confident,

willing volunteers. Five agents saw leadership as a barrier and another five said that conveying Extension's mission was a hindrance. Three agents responded that organization was a challenge and another three agents noted that they lacked time to provide training. Two agents said they had a dearth of opportunity to give presentations; another two agents said they lacked resources or funding for resources. One agent said the group lacked diversity in the topics offered.

Agents were asked what barriers they faced in continuing to grow their Speakers Bureaus. As with creating a bureau, most agents (twenty-three) responded that finding confident, willing volunteers will be their greatest challenge in growing their Speakers Bureaus. Four agents would like to have a greater diversity of topics to offer. Four agents are hindered by limited time or staff. Three agents said they would need more resources, another three noted ensuring Extension's mission, another three said lack of interest from the community, another three said leadership was a challenge, and another three agents cited a lack of training. Two agents said their barrier was the age of their volunteers. One agent said the egos of some volunteers would stifle growth. Another agent said the county's small population was the limiting factor. One agent said Extension's Partial Cost Recovery requirement would be hamper growth. Another agent said volunteers were unwilling to work with youth. One mentioned that travel was a barrier and another agent cited insufficient appreciation from other volunteers.

Volunteer Findings

Volunteers were asked if they would participate if their counties did have a Speakers Bureau. Table 59 indicates that fifty-four percent would like to participate and forty-six say they would not like to participate.

Table 59

Volunteers Indication of Participation If There Were a Speakers Bureau in Their County.
($n = 108$)

	Volunteers	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	58	54
No	50	46

Volunteers who said they would not want to participate if their Master Gardener program had a Speakers Bureau were asked to give reasons for their answers. Thirteen volunteers said they do not like to speak in public. Five volunteers felt that they did not have enough time to participate. Two said they would need more information to determine whether to participate, and two others said giving presentations costs too much. One volunteer cited a lack of knowledge and another lacked experience.

Volunteers were asked what barriers they faced for beginning a Speakers Bureau. Fifteen said there were no barriers to beginning a Speakers Bureau. Eighteen volunteers

said their program had too few volunteers. Sixteen cited the need for leadership and organization. Seven said the time commitment was a barrier. Four mentioned a dearth of requests for speakers; three said knowledge was lacking; and another three cited the high cost of maintaining a Speakers Bureau. Two said there was little county support for a Speakers Bureau, and two others said too much work was involved and mentioned insufficient commitment. One noted the limited resources in the county, another said the association was inexperienced, and one said the group was not good at research.

Volunteers who participate in a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau were asked what barriers they faced when beginning to participate in the Speakers Bureau. Twenty-two said there were no barriers for them to participate in the bureau. Fourteen said they lacked confidence. Thirteen said they needed more technical skills. Twelve said they lacked experience. Eight said time was an issue for them. Six said there was a lack of organization or leadership for the Speakers Bureau. Three needed resources, another three cited a lack of community awareness, and three others said there was a lack of training. Two said they had trouble knowing what the audience expected.

Then volunteers were asked what barriers they continue to face when growing the Speakers Bureau. Twelve found having time to participate was a struggle. Ten said they lacked confidence or experience. Seven said making the public aware of the Speakers Bureau was a limit to growth. Nine said coming up with new topics. Six responded that having willing volunteers was their barrier to growth. Five mentioned that they lacked technical skills. Three felt keeping talks interesting was a problem. Two said they lack leadership and cannot travel. The following were listed by one person

each as a barrier: the cost of attending Master Gardener Specialist Training, ensuring that the information is accurate, a high burnout level, training new speakers, completing paperwork, and the lack of ready-made presentations. One volunteer commented, “We offer opportunities to do research, plan presentations and provide support to speakers for those who don’t want to actually present, but so far that’s had limited success.”

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service’s mission includes “improving the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high-quality, relevant education (Texas AgriLife Extension Service, n.d., para. 3). Extension volunteers play a critical role in fulfilling that mission through their service in helping deliver research-based information to the public (Boleman and Burkham, 2005). “The teaching role is one of the most significant contributions that volunteers make to Extension programs” (Bolton, 1992, para. 4). The 2010 *Texas Master Gardener Annual Report* shows that speaking engagements reach more people than does any other regularly conducted Master Gardener activity. Master Gardener volunteers delivered 2,360 presentations that reached 193,858 people in 2010 (Fry, 2010). Many county Master Gardener Programs have formal Speakers Bureaus that actively manage the outreach activity of public presentations. However, not all Master Gardener Programs have Speakers Bureaus or individual volunteers who make public presentations.

It is the significant educational benefit that volunteers provide Extension’s clientele through their speaking engagements that led to this study. The value of this study is that the findings can be used to begin a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau, enhance the capabilities of an existing Master Gardener Speakers Bureau, and to improve other Extension volunteer programs. The following objectives were developed to guide this research:

- Identify characteristics of successful Speakers Bureaus according to Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener Volunteers.
- Identify best practices for both volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus.
- Describe barriers to development and growth of Speakers Bureaus.

Findings in each objective often overlap or provide understanding for another objective; therefore, the terms, successful characteristics, best practices, and barriers can be found in each of the objective headings.

Successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus

Concepts of success were determined from the two primary study populations—agents and volunteers—who are immediately involved in educational outreach via a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau. Success appears to be defined in different ways, depending on the perspective of the person asked. For example, a Master Gardener volunteer may believe that success is learning about new horticulture topics. An agent may measure success by the number of clients reached at an educational event. The Extension Service may view success as being considered by the public to be a reliable source for research-based information. The client may gauge success by the amount of knowledge gained to make a specific decision.

More specifically, this study found that successful Speakers Bureaus depend on both agents and volunteers: Each group must display a positive attitude toward a Speakers Bureau as well as provide support and involvement to create and sustain it.

Positive Attitude

The findings show that 11 percent ($n = 41$) of the agents and volunteers believe that the people involved must have a positive attitude toward the Speakers Bureau. If the agent is hesitant to offer volunteer-led presentations, then the volunteers may feel this activity is not valued, and there will be no Master Gardener Speakers Bureau in the county. If the volunteers want a Speakers Bureau but the agent does not, then the barrier is the agent. Two of the six agents in the study indicated clearly that they had no interest in offering volunteer-led presentations in their counties. For a Speakers Bureaus to be successful there must be buy-in from the agent and the volunteers.

Another critical factor for successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus is that the volunteers must be available and willing to serve in this educational capacity. Eighteen percent ($n = 66$) of the volunteers and agents responded that a barrier is the lack of willing volunteers to serve in the Speakers Bureau. However, 55 percent of the volunteers in the study who do not have Speakers Bureaus indicated that they would participate if such a bureau were in their counties. There may simply be a misconception that there are no willing volunteers. It is recommended that agents present the idea of establishing a Speakers Bureau to their volunteers regardless of whether or not they believe their volunteers will serve. Agents will need to explain the support for and expectations of the volunteers. Perhaps an agent from a county with a successful Speakers Bureau could present the concept to the Master Gardeners in a county without one.

Understanding the benefits of the Speakers Bureau will help foster a positive attitude. One hundred percent of the agents responded that the efforts of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus fit into Extension's strategic plan. Agents responded that Speakers Bureaus allow them more time to focus on other job-related duties. The findings show that the benefits for volunteers include opportunities to grow personally, to meet new people, and to make a difference in their communities. The AgriLife Extension Service benefits by educating the community and having an audience in which output information can be gathered. Speakers Bureaus also reach more people at once, saving time and resources for the agent, the volunteer, and the agency.

Support

Participants in a Speakers Bureau need support from the agent and from others not participating in the bureau. This finding aligns with research by Kidd and Kidd (1997), who found that support from peers and staff is instrumental to a volunteer's continued involvement with educational programs.

Speakers Bureau volunteers feel supported and valued when their efforts are reported to fellow volunteers and all know and understand their contributions. The study revealed that 69 percent of volunteers who participate in the Speakers Bureau give feedback from their presentations. Seventy-eight percent of the volunteers said they like getting feedback from the presenters, and 96 percent said they believe that the feedback is interesting or helpful. The feedback given from Speakers Bureau presentations come from Extension customer satisfaction evaluations, Extension outcome evaluations, self-evaluations, and presentation summary forms.

Speakers Bureau members should give updates at monthly association meetings about their activities. The updates offer opportunities to relay assessment information to others in the Master Gardener Program. Such information may lead to better educational efforts in other Master Gardener activities. It may also spark interest in other volunteers to serve in the Speakers Bureau. Furthermore, the updates can also serve as marketing and advocacy pieces for outsiders who hear or read this information.

Master Gardener Volunteer's Involvement

Volunteers must be trusted to teach research-based information. If Extension's reputation and educational integrity are compromised by volunteers teaching home remedies and unproven practices, its clients may turn to other sources for credible information. Volunteers who serve in Speakers Bureaus must clearly understand this Extension priority. It is recommended that agents and volunteer leadership orient or train new volunteers preparing to serving in the Speakers Bureau to give volunteers an opportunity to learn what is expected of them. As a part of the orientation, volunteers should be given a job description. The job description should specify clearly that only research-based information may be given in presentations. Information in the job description may include:

- How they will be contacted when they are requested to speak
- That the volunteer will be informed of the presentation's location, date, time, and topic
- That the volunteer will be told who the intended audience will be
- That the volunteer will need to determine the appropriate equipment to take

- That the volunteer will need to prepare assessment paperwork
- That the volunteer will need to summarize the assessment information after the presentation, and report the findings to the agent and others interested in the information

Extension Agent's Involvement

Master Gardener volunteer's time is valuable and limited, as is the Extension Agent's. Seevers and Rosencrans (2001) found that using volunteers gave teachers more time to focus on other aspects of their programs and that volunteers could add expertise to certain subjects to enhance the learning experience. The results of this study support the findings by Seevers and Rosencrans. The peer review cautioned that an agent may not always have opportunities to review presentation material or to be heavily involved in managing a Speakers Bureau. It is recommended that the agent be as involved as possible and should delegate duties to volunteers to free up time to focus on more important priorities, such as reviewing presentation material.

Some responsibilities that should be delegated are:

- Scheduling events
- Marketing efforts
- Taking requests and pairing an event with the appropriate volunteer
- Training, such as on equipment setup or preparing a PowerPoint slide show

Following are responsibilities that are recommended for agents. They need not be executed solely by the agent, but they should be coordinated in conjunction with Speakers Bureau leadership.

- Presentation content
- Topic choice
- Recruiting efforts
- Assessment and reporting

Best Practices of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus

Two overarching best practices emerged from the findings: volunteer leadership and training opportunities. These two practices address barriers identified by the respondents of the questionnaire and the peer debriefing. Recommendations are provided with an explanation of the situations.

Volunteer Leadership

Agents believed that to be effective, Speakers Bureaus should be managed primarily by volunteers. Wu and Carter's (2000) research confirm that volunteer educators should appoint leadership. However, 85 percent of the agents in the study indicated that they assisted with basic coordination duties. This self-reported involvement by the agents is a clear indicator of a successful Speakers Bureaus as described previously.

It is recommended that each Speakers Bureau have a volunteer coordinator or a committee to perform the bureau's administrative work. If not performed, the following administrative duties were revealed as barriers to the success of a Speakers Bureau; therefore, the volunteer leadership must handle the following tasks:

- Help select timely and relevant topics to be presented
- Coordinate marketing efforts to generate requests for presentations

- Collect, interpret, and report assessment results to the agent, fellow Master Gardeners, and other stakeholders
- Actively and continually recruit volunteers to serve in the Speakers Bureau
- Delegate duties as needed to prevent situations where only a few volunteers do the majority of work which results in "burned out" volunteers

Although not considered a barrier, an additional duty identified that would assist with effective management is to identify a volunteer or volunteers to receive speaking engagement requests from clientele and match the requests with appropriate volunteers.

A couple of final comments about administrative duties: Master Gardener volunteers performing them should be willing and interested in seeking insight and input from the agent; and the agent should be willing and interested in providing such insight and input. Volunteers and agents should understand that volunteers who participate in activities such as a Speakers Bureau tend to communicate primarily with the volunteer leader instead of the agent, whether reporting positive news, negative occurrences, or progress. In most cases, this reporting chain is completely appropriate; however, it is recommended that the volunteer leader or committee keep the agent informed about the progress and activities of the Speakers Bureau and any situation that may need attention. The agent is ultimately responsible for the Speakers Bureau as an educational activity of the Extension Service and must be kept informed, regardless of the agent's level of involvement.

Timely and Relevant Topics

The findings show that Speakers Bureaus should offer a variety of timely and relevant presentation topics. Eighty-one agents and volunteers believe that offering a variety of topics helps define a Speakers Bureaus. It is recommended that maintaining a list of timely and relevant topics be an ongoing duty of the volunteer leadership and/or agent. This task takes time, research, and presentation development skills. Agents who are not active in this activity should be given opportunities to review presentations for research-based accuracy. The number and types of topics may be determined by:

- Key horticultural issues for the year or region
- Knowledge level or resources available to create new presentations
- Number of volunteers available to develop and deliver presentations
- Number and type of requests
- Effective management of the Speakers Bureau

An important issue identified by the peer review committee focused on the sources of presentation topics; whether they would be based only on requests received, or they would be chosen from the topics that “need” to be pushed out into the community. Although clientele may not request presentations on landscape water conservation, education is certainly needed on this subject.

Another recommendation was to limit the number of topics a Speakers Bureau offers. Such a limit could bring several benefits: it may give the agent more time to be involved in content development or to review the presentation material; reduce the workload for volunteers, thus preventing burnout; improve volunteer recruiting success

by making the breadth of topics less intimidating; and make scheduling easier if several volunteers can teach the same topic. Having a group of presenters available would also allow a volunteer to turn down a speaking engagement with little stress if he/she is unavailable to fill the request.

Marketing

One challenge identified in the study was getting the word out to community members about the services provided by a Speakers Bureau. Seventeen percent of volunteers said that a significant barrier for their Speakers Bureaus is limited requests from the public. It is recommended that Master Gardeners Programs market not only the event featuring a Speakers Bureau presenter, but also the Speakers Bureau itself and the services provided. Marketing should be an ongoing effort, using several strategies beyond word-of-mouth. Master Gardener Programs often use public service announcements (PSAs) to inform local residents about an issue or an educational opportunity. Additional methods may include using social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, or blogs) and posting fliers and announcements in retail nurseries and garden centers can be effective. The marketing effort should be a critical responsibility of the Speakers Bureau leadership to create a manageable demand for the bureau.

Simple Assessment and Reporting Methods

One of the greatest challenges of a Speakers Bureau is evaluating its efforts. One volunteered responded that a barrier to growth is “mountains of paper work... I do not feel right turning in the group’s names and their addresses. There is no need for that. A simple head count should suffice.” Seventy-four percent of volunteers and 60 percent of

agents report that they assess the Speakers Bureau efforts. Sixty percent of volunteers and 76 percent of agents say they report the findings in the assessments. A practice recommended for successful Speakers Bureaus is to simplify assessment and reporting for the volunteers. The most valuable information an assessment could garner from an educational audience are the change or increase in knowledge, the intent to adopt the taught practice, and any anticipated economic savings due to the knowledge or practices. In recent years, Extension Services have focused great effort in developing assessment instruments and protocols to determine these educational impacts. It is also understood that not every educational presentation needs to be evaluated at this level. Often a report only on the number present is adequate. Agents should work closely with those in Speakers Bureaus to help them understand what is needed for an agent's reports and why it is needed from an agency and agent standpoint. With proper training and planning, volunteers can be a vital part of the assessment process without causing undue stress or burden. Standardizing a simple assessment form and reporting process should help alleviate the stress of this necessary step. Furthermore, separating action items, such as signups for monthly gardening newsletters (requiring contact information) and program assessment questionnaires (requiring no identifying information) can aid in eliciting more candid and helpful feedback from participants. This will require multiple forms or instruments to gain specific information. This approach effectively transfers the decision or burden of providing personal information to the individuals attending the event instead of the volunteer giving the presentation. Working together, the agent and

Speakers Bureau leadership can develop effective and efficient evaluating tools and reporting processes.

Recruit Volunteers

Successful Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus should recruit volunteers with specific skills and experiences. Both agents and the Speakers Bureau leadership should work together to identify volunteers who are best suited to serve. It is recommended that those with a particular interest or knowledge in a certain horticultural subject would make excellent candidates to serve in a Speakers Bureau. If a person lacks the desire or skills to present, it may be possible to use the volunteer's knowledge in developing the presentation and recruiting other volunteers to present the topic. Beyond horticultural knowledge, presentation skills and experience are worthy volunteer characteristics to seek in recruits. Former school teachers or industry professionals with public speaking duties are good sources of volunteers for Speakers Bureaus.

Volunteers with neither horticultural knowledge nor presentation experience need not be dissuaded from serving. Focused training can help them acquire this knowledge and develop presentation skills. Plus, these attributes are unnecessary for volunteers to carry out many Speakers Bureau duties, such as management and computer skills.

An effective strategy suggested during the study was to identify potential Speakers Bureaus volunteers during the initial Master Gardener Intern training classes. One agent required volunteer trainees to give a presentation to their fellow classmates on

a horticulture topic. Those who presented accurate material and seemed comfortable giving the presentation were recruited to serve in the Speakers Bureau.

Agents and Master Gardener program leaders should also purposely recruit new volunteers with skills in and/or attitudes favorable to Speakers Bureau participation. Backed by a job description and an understanding of a particular Master Gardener program's Speakers Bureau needs, an agent may add willing and qualified people to the volunteer ranks. This type of strategic recruitment is a natural and easy way to add volunteers with the positive attitude and presentation skills necessary for a Speakers Bureau's success.

Time

Volunteers identified a lack of time as a barrier for the growth and development of a Speakers Bureau. If this is true for most volunteers, then the efforts of Speakers Bureaus are extremely limited. Twenty volunteers noted that time is a barrier. One volunteer responded that the local Speakers Bureau has had little success in establishing different jobs to reduce the time and effort required of a single volunteer. Although this is not uncommon, it is critical to delegate responsibilities and disperse duties among several volunteers. For example, one person could research the new or requested topic, another could build the presentation, another could present, someone else could set up the multimedia equipment, and another person could evaluate and report. The division of the responsibilities may depend on the individual volunteers. Some may want to research, build the presentation, and present but leave assessment and room setup to someone else. The Speakers Bureau leadership and volunteers would need to

communicate effectively to determine what individuals need to help them save time and be an effective member of the Speakers Bureau.

Training

Less than one-half of the participants in the Speakers Bureau said they received training to participate in the Speakers Bureau. Sixty-seven percent of volunteers responded that training would help people participate in a Speakers Bureau. Researchers Sandlin and St. Clair (2005) recommended that volunteers be trained to give educational speeches. The barriers for agents in offering training are the lack of time to focus on anything other than horticulture subject matter (11 responses), the difficulty of reaching a large enough audience to make it worth their time to offer this type of training (4 responses), and the lack of resources about Speakers Bureaus (4 responses).

One recommendation was to include speaking training in the Master Gardener Intern classes, either by offering a training class on “how to give presentations” or by having each intern present a horticulture project or subject to fellow interns for feedback. This activity would reinforce the concept that Master Gardeners are educators, which is their goal to meet Extension’s mission.

Further in-depth trainings that are specific to Speakers Bureau members are also encouraged. These trainings may be coordinated and implemented by veteran volunteers. For example, someone with multimedia skills could teach others how to set up the equipment. The state Master Gardener office could secure educational resources and make them available online for agents and volunteers to use. The resources could cover

PowerPoint presentations, effective public speaking, effective teaching methods, and appropriate use of Master Gardener and Extension logos.

Subject Matter Knowledge and Presentation Skills

The study found that presentation skills and knowledge of subject matter are necessary for successful Speakers Bureaus. Eighteen agents and 122 volunteers said that subject matter knowledge is important, and 25 agents and 86 volunteers believe that speaking skills are important. A peer review committee member noted that “poor speaking skills will be forgiven by an audience if the information presented is valuable.” Offering training to prepare volunteers to participate in a Speakers Bureau has been identified as a best practice of a Master Gardener Speakers Bureau. Texas Master Gardener Programs have taught subject matter successfully for almost thirty years. The responsibility of training falls on the agent. Another avenue to offer training is through the Texas Master Gardener Specialist Program. Eleven subject areas are taught: Junior Master Gardener, Entomology, Earth-Kind, Irrigation Efficiency, Plant Propagation, Greenhouse Management, Vegetable, Rainwater Harvesting, Citriculture, Compost, and Firewise Landscaping. Along with advanced training, volunteers who complete any of the specialist courses are expected to provide a minimum of fifteen hours of volunteer service above their county’s recertification requirements. Offering presentations through local Speakers Bureaus would directly align with the Specialist certification expectation.

Volunteer Perception

Volunteers often believe they are unqualified to give educational presentations. Fourteen volunteers responded that they lack confidence to give presentations. Their

perceptions may be that they lack the speaking skills or the subject matter knowledge to be an effective member of a Speakers Bureau. One volunteer stated “they need more time in the program to build up knowledge.” The questionnaire did not ask volunteers how long they had been in the Master Gardener Program. Knowing the length of service for volunteers may help explain why some believe they need more knowledge to be an effective speaker.

Convincing volunteers to participate in the Speakers Bureau may be as simple as asking them. Stepputat (1995, p. 163) states, “Most people currently volunteer because they were specifically asked to help.” Volunteers who possess skills that would benefit the Speakers Bureaus should be asked. They should be told why they are being asked and what they are being asked to do.

Fenzel and Flippen (2006) suggested that mentoring inexperienced teachers may add to their effectiveness. It is recommended that a mentoring program may help guide new volunteers through the process of giving presentations and gain confidence in their abilities.

Another recommendation is to allow new presenters to practice their presentations in front of other Master Gardeners and get feedback from the group. This may be done at a Master Gardener Intern training or at a monthly Master Gardener Association meeting. The Speakers Bureau could also allow potential volunteers to present to a small group of their peers.

Finally, agents and Speakers Bureau leadership must remember that this activity is not for everyone. Volunteers must have the freedom to turn down an offer to participate, even if they possess the requisite skills.

Technology

Some volunteers are simply uncomfortable with either multimedia equipment or computer software. Eighteen volunteers responded that technical skills are a barrier for them. The research also finds that 88 percent of the Speakers Bureaus use multimedia equipment. To reduce this technology barrier, it is recommended that bureaus use volunteers, agents, or Extension Specialists who have technology skills to train others.

Because the various types and brands of media equipment have differing setup requirements, it is recommended that someone familiar with the equipment be tapped to teach other volunteers how to use that piece of equipment. It would also be beneficial for the new person using the equipment to set it up and ask questions while the trainer is available. This could be done one-on-one, or several volunteers could be trained at once. It may also alleviate hesitation with equipment if the person with technology skills could be available to help set up the equipment or to help by phone if a problem arises on the day of the presentation.

Eight counties said they do not use multimedia equipment for presentations. This finding reveals that such equipment is not always necessary to give presentations and that alternative types of presentations can also be effective. Other types of presentations include tours, workshop, and demonstrations. If technology is a barrier, then volunteers

should be encouraged to explore other presentation methods that do not use multimedia equipment.

Barriers to Growth and Development of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus

Barriers to establishing and sustaining Speakers Bureaus must be addressed before a Speakers Bureau can be successful. Some limitations specific to a county may arise, but the data in this study should help reduce or eliminate the overarching obstacles that hinder the growth and development for most county Speakers Bureaus.

The barriers revealed in the research were addressed previously in the best practices section. They are: a lack of training topics, little or no marketing, complicated and lengthy evaluating and reporting procedures, and a lack of willing volunteers. All of these issues can be addressed by using volunteer leadership. The research also revealed other barriers that are focused on the volunteers, including a lack of subject matter and presentation skills, volunteers' perception of lack of abilities, and lack of technology skills. The best practices found that providing training would reduce these impediments. Table 60 summarizes the best practices revealed from research along with the situations and recommendations to improve Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus.

Table 60

Improving Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus

Best Practice	Situation	Recommendation
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack subject matter knowledge • Lack speaking skills • Lack technology skills • Volunteer’s perception of lack of skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Master Gardener certification training, veteran volunteers and state Master Gardener office to train volunteers • Utilize mentors
Volunteer Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of topics • Community is unaware of Speakers Bureau • Frustrating reporting and assessment methods • Lack of willing volunteers • Lack time to volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with agent to choose topics • Market • Work with agent to simplify reporting and evaluating • Recruit specific volunteers • Utilize mentors • Provide orientation and job descriptions

Suggestions for Improvement of Speakers Bureau at State Level

The following suggestions were offered in the peer debriefing to aid local Speakers Bureaus at the State level:

- Offer kits or “canned” presentations.
- Offer training modules on speaking skills (such as how to create a slide show, and how and when to use logos) that any Master Gardener can use.
- Write Extension reports that are based on the needs of the Speakers Bureau.

- Different needs will be based on whether the Speakers Bureau is established or just beginning.
- Publish articles in magazines such as Texas Gardener promoting Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus to the state.
- Perhaps establish a Speakers Bureau task force to accumulate and package information.

Canned presentations are created for anyone to use without having to research, prepare a PowerPoint presentation, or develop speaker notes. There are, however, conflicting views on offering canned presentations. Some volunteers believe that canned presentations suppress their creativity or limit the amount of specific information on a topic. A canned presentation could be a full presentation complete with speaker notes, or it could be only an outline of objectives that could be further developed by the presenter. These presentations could be catalogued at the State office for use or for reference material, and the county program could determine how best to use these presentations.

Some of the other above-mentioned suggestions may conflict with the responsibilities of the volunteer leadership at the county level. For example, statewide marketing of county Speakers Bureaus may conflict with local marketing efforts. The task force would have to assess the need to market Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus statewide to determine if this would be beneficial to all Master Gardener Programs.

Suggestions for Future Research

For future research, the questionnaire should be adjusted to better determine successful Speakers Bureaus.

- Offer “0” or “none” as an answer choice for some questions.
- Describe an ineffective Speakers Bureau to help respondents assess the effectiveness of a Speakers Bureau.
- “Speaker” should be listed as an option for a role in the Speakers Bureau.
- Define terms more clearly.
- Ask volunteers how long they have been Master Gardener.
- Determine the number of topics offered by each existing Speakers Bureau.

The size of the Master Gardener Program and the scope of its educational outreach can vary greatly. For future research, it may be worthwhile to compare rural counties to urban counties to determine whether size is related to success. Having a large pool of volunteers and a larger population to use in a Speakers Bureau may be the reason that larger counties can offer more presentations, provide a greater variety of topics, or have more sources of subject matter information.

Summary of Results

It is widely accepted that Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus are important and useful to accomplishing the mission of the Master Gardener Program and the Extension Service. Master Gardeners conduct thousands of successful educational presentations for the public each year in Texas. Their success and this study have identified best practices and barriers to growth and development of Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus.

These results of this study can be communicated to Master Gardener Programs wanting to begin or grow a Speakers Bureau. The information will also be useful to other Extension volunteer programs and other volunteer organizations whose mission is

to educate the public. We believe that these results can improve information delivery for any group utilizing volunteers.

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APPENDIX A

SPEAKER'S BUREAUS QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AGENTS

Q62 You have been asked to participate in a research project about furthering educational program delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of a speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your involvement in the Master Gardener program. This study should take less than 30 minutes. Your participation is voluntary; in no way are you required to participate. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Master Gardener Program being affected. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jayla Fry at (979) 845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q41 How long have you been an agent of Texas AgriLife Extension Service?

- less than 5 years (1)
- 6-10 years (2)
- 11-15 years (3)
- 16-20 years (4)
- 21-25 years (5)
- 26-30 years (6)
- more than 31 years (7)

Q42 How long have you worked with the Master Gardener Program?

- less than 5 (1)
- 6-10 years (2)
- 11-15 years (3)
- 16-20 years (4)
- 21-25 years (5)
- 26-30 years (6)
- more than 31 years (7)

Q19 How many volunteers are in your Master Gardeners Program?

- 0-49 (1)
- 50-99 (2)
- 100-149 (3)
- 150-199 (4)
- 200-249 (5)
- 250-299 (6)
- 300-349 (7)
- 350-399 (8)
- 400-449 (9)
- 450-499 (10)
- 500-549 (11)
- 550-599 (12)
- more than 600 (13)

Q39 Does your Master Gardener Program have a Speaker's Bureau? Meaning, does a volunteer or group of volunteers regularly give presentations, demonstrations, or lectures to Master Gardeners or to the public.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To How many Master Gardener volunteers c...

Q45 Would you like to have a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To What is keeping you from having a Spe...

Q46 Why would you not like to have a Speaker's Bureau?

If Why would you not like to h... Is Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for you time

filling out th...

Q47 What is keeping you from having a Speaker's Bureau?

Q49 Do you have requests for presentations that are unfilled?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q50 Do you think the Speaker's Bureau efforts fit into Extension's Strategic Plan?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What is the most important reason to ...

Q51 How do Speaker's Bureau efforts fit into Extension's Strategic Plan?

Q52 What is the most important reason to have a Speaker's Bureau?

Q53 What would be the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to you?

Q54 What would be the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the volunteer?

Q55 What would be the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the clientele?

Q56 What would be the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the agency?

Q57 What are the characteristics of a successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q58 What do you think would be needed to prepare volunteers to participate in a Speaker's Bureau?

Q59 What barriers do you foresee in establishing a Speaker's Bureau?

Q60 What barriers do you foresee in growing a Speaker's Bureau?

If What barriers do you foresee... Is Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out th...If What barriers do you foresee... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out th...

Q2 How many Master Gardener volunteers currently participate in the Speaker's Bureau? Participants include researcher, presentation preparation, presenter, manager/chair of Speaker's Bureau committee, manager of schedule, etc.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- 9 (9)
- 10 (10)
- 11 (11)
- 12 (12)
- 13 (13)
- 14 (14)
- 15 (15)
- 16 (16)
- 17 (17)
- 18 (18)
- 19 (19)
- 20 (20)
- more than 20 (21)

Q1 Including this year, how long has your Master Gardener program had a Speaker's Bureau?

- 0-5 years (1)
- 6-10 years (2)
- 11-15 years (3)
- 16-20 years (4)
- 21-25 years (5)
- 26-30 years (6)

Q4 What style of presentation does the Speaker's Bureau offer? Check all that apply.

- Lecture/Speech (1)
- Demonstration (2)
- Workshop/Hand-on (3)
- Other (4) _____

Q3 What topics does the Speaker's Bureau cover?

Q22 How many presentations does your Speaker's Bureau conduct each year?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- 9 (9)
- 10 (10)
- 11 (11)
- 12 (12)
- 13 (13)
- 14 (14)
- 15 (15)
- 16 (16)
- 17 (17)
- 18 (18)
- 19 (19)
- 20 (20)
- 21 (21)
- 22 (22)
- 23 (23)
- 24 (24)
- 25 (25)
- 26 (26)
- 27 (27)
- 28 (28)
- 29 (29)
- 30 (30)
- more than 30 (31)

Q23 How many requests for Speaker's Bureau presentations are not filled each year?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- 9 (9)
- 10 (10)
- 11 (11)
- 12 (12)
- 13 (13)
- 14 (14)
- 15 (15)
- 16 (16)
- 17 (17)
- 18 (18)
- 19 (19)
- 20 (20)
- 21 (21)
- 22 (22)
- 23 (23)
- 24 (24)
- 25 (25)
- 26 (26)
- 27 (27)
- 28 (28)
- 29 (29)
- 30 (30)
- more than 30 (31)

Q25 Do you have repeat request for Speaker's Bureau presentations by a person or group?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q21 How many hours does the Speaker's Bureau spend on developing each new presentation?

- 0-3 (1)
- 4-6 (2)
- 7-9 (3)
- more than 10 (4)

Q5 How does your Speaker's Bureau communicate with your clientele about the educational opportunities offered by the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, e-mail, etc.) (1)
- Word of mouth (2)
- Other (3) _____

Q31 Would you like to have more Master Gardeners participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q26 Do you recruit volunteers to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you assist in any coordination dut...

Q27 What characteristics do you look for when recruiting for the Speaker's Bureau?

Q37 Do you assist in any coordination duties of the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you review Speaker' s Bureau prese...

Q29 How do you assist in the coordination duties of the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Scheduling events (1)
- Matching volunteer(s) to group making the request (2)
- Matching volunteer(s) to the topic requested (3)
- Help advertise (4)
- Help evaluate (5)
- Help report (6)
- Other (7) _____

Q6 As the Master Gardener Coordinator, how involved are you with your Speaker's Bureau?

- Very Uninvolved (I let them manage themselves) (1)
- Uninvolved (I approve what the volunteers have planned) (2)
- Neither Involved nor Uninvolved (I am available when they need me) (3)
- Involved (I help manage the Speaker's Bureau and review presentation material) (4)
- Very Involved (I manage the Speaker's Bureau activities and make some presentations) (5)

Q7 In what ways do you interact with your Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

Q28 Do you review Speaker' s Bureau presentation material?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q8 What characteristics describe a successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q11 Is training offered to prepare volunteers to give Speaker's Bureau presentations?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Overall, how effective is your SB at ...

Q13 What training or process do your Master Gardeners go through in order to become Speaker's Bureau members? Check all that apply.

- Power point skills (1)
- Presentation skills (2)
- Research skills (3)
- Evaluation process (4)
- Other (5) _____

Q9 Overall, how effective is your Speaker's Bureau at delivering Extension educational programs to the public?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q10 Overall, how effective is your Speaker's Bureau at taking care of business internally and coordinating themselves?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q14 What barriers did you face establishing your Speaker's Bureau?

Q61 What barriers do you face growing your Speaker's Bureau?

Q43 Does the Speaker's Bureau use any multi-media equipment?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To How important is having an active Spe...

Q32 What multi-media equipment does the Speaker's Bureau use?

- Computer (1)
- Projector (2)
- TV/DVD (3)
- Microphone (4)
- Other (5) _____

Q15 How important is having an active Speaker's Bureau within your Master Gardener program in fulfilling your programmatic goals?

- Not at all Important (1)
- Very Unimportant (2)
- Neither Important nor Unimportant (3)
- Very Important (4)
- Extremely Important (5)

Q38 Do volunteers assess the effectiveness of their Speaker's Bureau presentations?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for you time filling out th...

Q16 How do your volunteers assess the effectiveness of their Speaker's Bureau presentations? Check all that apply.

- Yes, through Extension's Customer Satisfaction evaluation forms (1)
- Yes, through Extension's Outcome evaluation forms (2)
- Other (3) _____

Q44 Do you report the impact of your Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for you time filling out th...

Q17 Who do you report the impact of your Speaker's Bureau to? Check all that apply.

- The TExAS reporting system (1)
- Master Gardener Annual Report (2)
- Commissioner's Court (3)
- Other (4) _____

Q63 Thank you for your time filling out this questionnaire. We welcome any feedback you have about this survey or study. Please add comments below.

APPENDIX B
OFFICIAL VOLUNTEER SURVEY

Q72 You have been asked to participate in a research project about furthering educational program delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your involvement in the Master Gardener program. If you agree to participate in this study, please answer "yes" to the question below. This study will take less than 30 minutes. The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the Master Gardener program will be better equipped to respond to clientele request for speaker. Your participation is voluntary; in no way are you required to participate. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Master Gardener Program being affected. This study is confidential and will only be used as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Once you have completed the questionnaire, your name will be removed from the survey and cannot be reconnected to their answers. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jayla Fry at (979) 845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu. Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Do you have a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If there were a Speaker's Bureau in y...

Q3 Do you participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Would you like to participate in a Ma...

Q4 What is your role in the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Researcher (1)
- Presentation Preparation (2)
- Presenter (3)
- Manager/Committee Chair (4)
- Scheduler (5)
- Other, please explain. (6) _____

Q6 What style of presentations does your county's Speaker's Bureau offer? Check all that apply.

- Lecture/Speech (1)
- Demonstration (2)
- Workshop/Hands-on (3)
- Other, please explain. (4) _____

Q7 How does your Speaker's Bureau communicate with your clientele about the educational opportunities offered by Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.) (1)
- Word of mouth (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q14 How would you rate the efforts of your Speaker's Bureau?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q15 Where would you like the efforts of the Speaker's Bureau to be?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q16 Did you participate in training to prepare yourself to work with a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you assess the effectiveness of yo...

Q18 Do you think training would have helped you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q43 Do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q22 How do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations? Check all that apply.

- Customer Satisfaction Evaluation (1)
- Extension Outcome Evaluation (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q28 Do you report the results of the assessments?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q29 Who do you share the results of the assessments? Check all that apply.

- Agent (1)
- Others in the Speaker's Bureau (2)
- Others in the Master Gardener Program (3)
- Others, please explain. (4) _____

If Agent Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If Others in the

Speaker's Bureau Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If

Others in the Master Garden... Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling

out t...If Others, please explain. Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time

filling out t...If Others, please explain. Is Not Empty, Then Skip To Thank you for your

time filling out t...If Others, please explain. Is Empty, Then Skip To Thank you for your

time filling out t...

Q31 Would you like to participate in a Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think SB are important or useful?

Q33 Is there any specific training that would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Is feedback given from presentat...If Yes Is Selected,

Then Skip To Is feedback given from presentat...

Q35 Do you think Speaker's Bureaus are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q37 Is feedback given from presentations by the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q44 Would you like feedback from the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If Yes Is Selected,

Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q38 Do you find the information interesting or helpful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...If No Is

Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q40 If there were a Speaker's Bureau in you county, would you like to participate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q39 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If No Is Selected,

Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q48 Thank you for your time filling out this questionnaire. We welcome any feedback

you have about this survey or study. Please add comments below.

APPENDIX C
OFFICIAL VOLUNTEER SURVEY 2

Q72 You have been asked to participate in a research project about furthering educational program delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your involvement in the Master Gardener program. If you agree to participate in this study, please answer "yes" to the question below. This study will take less than 30 minutes. The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the Master Gardener program will be better equipped to respond to clientele request for speaker. Your participation is voluntary; in no way are you required to participate. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Master Gardener Program being affected. This study is confidential and will only be used as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Once you have completed the questionnaire, your name will be removed from the survey and cannot be reconnected to their answers. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jayla Fry at (979) 845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu. Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Do you have a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If there were a Speaker's Bureau in y...

Q3 Do you participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Would you like to participate in a Ma...

Q5 What topics does your county's Speaker's Bureau cover?

Q8 What do you think is the most important reason to have a Speaker's Bureau?

Q13 What are characteristics of a successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q16 Did you participate in training to prepare yourself to work with a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think training would have help...

Q17 What type of training did you participate in and who offered this training?

If What type of training ... Is Not Empty, Then Skip To What barriers did you face when

begin...If What type of training ... Is Empty, Then Skip To What barriers did you face

when begin...

Q18 Do you think training would have helped you?

Yes (1)

No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What barriers did you face when begin...

Q19 What type of training would have helped?

Q20 What barriers did you face when beginning to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q21 What barriers do you continue to face to maintain or grow your efforts in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q9 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to you?

Q10 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the agent?

Q11 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the client?

Q12 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the agency?

If What is the benefit of the&... Is Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to

the surve...If What is the benefit of the&... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for

your input to the surve...

Q31 Would you like to participate in a Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

Yes (1)

No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think SB are important or useful?

Q32 What are the barriers for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q33 Is there any specific training that would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

Yes (1)

No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What characteristics would describe a...

Q34 What training would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

If What training would be help... Is Equal to, Then Skip To What characteristics would describe a...If What training would be help... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To What characteristics would describe a...

Q35 Do you think Speaker's Bureaus are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q36 What characteristics would describe a successful Speaker's Bureau?

If What characteristics would ... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If What characteristics would ... Is Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q40 If there were a Speaker's Bureau in your county, would you like to participate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To What do think are characteristics of ...

Q45 What reasons would cause you to not want to participate?

Q39 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q46 What do think are characteristics of successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q47 What barriers are there for beginning a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

Q48 Thank you for your time filling out this questionnaire. We welcome any feedback you have about this survey or study. Please add comments below.

APPENDIX D
FLORIDA PRE-NOTICE LETTER

Dear Master Gardener Coordinator,

In the next few days, you will receive an e-mail from Jayla Fry, the Texas Master Gardener Coordinator (jbfry@ag.tamu.edu). She is conducting a study of the Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus and will ask for your help to test her questionnaire. In this process, you'll be asked to complete the survey two separate times within 48-96 hours.

I recognize that you are busy and this is adding another thing to your already full plate, but please take 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

This research project will identify successful Master Gardener speaker's bureaus, best practices for establishing and growing speaker's bureaus and obstacles that hinder growth and development of speaker's bureaus. She has agreed to provide us with feedback that will benefit our Master Gardener program and may allow us to expand the effort of our volunteer educators through public presentations. As a small token of her appreciation, if you complete both questionnaires, you will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 Lowes gift card,

Have a great rest of the week and thank in advance for helping.

Tom Wichman
Florida Master Gardener Coordinator
PO Box 110675
107 Mehrhof Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611-0675
Phone: 352-273-4521
Mobile: 352-514-6885
Web: <http://mastergardener.ifas.ufl.edu>

UF Gardening information can also be found on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Flickr](#), and [Wordpress](#).

APPENDIX E
ARKANSAS PRE-NOTICE LETTER

Agents with MG responsibility:

In the next few days, you will receive an e-mail from Jayla Fry, the Texas Master Gardener Coordinator (jbfry@ag.tamu.edu). She is conducting a study of Master Gardener volunteer presenters and will ask for your help to test her questionnaire. There questions for both programs who have volunteer presenters and programs that do not have volunteer presenters. In this process, you'll be asked to complete the survey two separate times within 48-96 hours.

I recognize this you are busy and this is adding another thing to your already full plate, but please take 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

This research project will identify successful Master Gardener volunteer presenters, best practices for volunteer presenters and obstacles that hinder growth for volunteer presenters. She has agreed to provide us with feedback that will benefit our Master Gardener program and may allow us to expand the effort of our volunteer educators through public presentations.

As a small token of her appreciation, if you complete both questionnaires, you will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 Lowes gift card,

Thanks for helping out the MG program--Jayla will share her findings with us. Janet

If you need to contact Jayla, here is her contact information:

Jayla B. Fry

Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.

Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2134

(979) 845-3308

jbfry@ag.tamu.edu

Janet B. Carson

Extension Horticulture Specialist

2301 S. University Avenue

Little Rock, AR 72204

501-671-2174/ Fax 501-671-2303

jcarson@uaex.edu

APPENDIX F
FLORIDA INVITATION EMAIL

My name is Jayla Fry and I'm the Texas Master Gardener Coordinator and working on a Master's Degree at Texas A&M University in Agriculture Education. I am writing an instrument to measure successful Master Gardener speaker's bureaus, best practices of speaker's bureaus and barriers to establish or grow speaker's bureaus. I'm inviting you to help me test the reliability of this instrument, because of your knowledge of the Master Gardener program. If you are willing to take the survey today and retake a second, similar survey by noon Thursday, August 11, 2011, you will be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 Lowes gift card. The information you provide will be confidential.

For this survey, a Speakers Bureau (SB) is defined as one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public. Presentations include speeches or lectures, workshops or hand-on activities or demonstrations. These are prepared presentations on topics that are requested or from a list of topics offered. All work going toward the educational effort is considered a part of a speaker's bureau.

Below is a link to the survey, a brief description of the purpose of this study and the objectives this instrument will measure. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jayla Fry

The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. Quantative and qualitative data will be gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers from across the state of Texas. This information will be useful for implementing speaker's bureaus in other Master Gardener groups, extending the capabilities of functioning speaker's bureaus, and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful speaker's bureaus
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener speaker's bureaus
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of speaker's bureaus

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=a35hNmiaPc03gag_0djLoKTgYYKbdI0&_=1

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

APPENDIX G
ARKANSAS INVITATION EMAIL

My name is Jayla Fry and I'm the Texas Master Gardener Coordinator and working on a Master's Degree at Texas A&M University in Agriculture Education. I am writing an instrument to measure successful Master Gardener volunteer presenters, best practices of volunteer presenters and barriers for growth of volunteer presenters. I'm inviting you to help me test the reliability of this instrument, because of your knowledge of the Master Gardener program. If you are willing to take the survey today and retake a second, similar survey by noon Friday, August 26, 2011, you will be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 Lowes gift card. The information you provide will be confidential.

For this survey, a volunteer presenter is defined as one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public. Presentations include speeches or lectures, workshops or hand-on activities or demonstrations. These are prepared presentations on topics that are requested or from a list of topics offered. All work going toward the educational effort is considered a part of a speaker's bureau. If you do not have volunteer presenters in your county, your information and knowledge will still be beneficial to this study.

Below is a link to the survey, a brief description of the purpose of this study and the objectives this instrument will measure. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jayla Fry

The purpose of this study is to describe successful Master Gardeners who give public presentations and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the growth of these volunteers within Master Gardener programs. Quantative and qualitative data will be gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers from across the state of Texas. This information will be useful for Master Gardener groups who do not give public educational presentations; it will extending the capabilities of functioning educational delivery and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful volunteers who give public educational presentations
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers who give public educational presentations
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of volunteers who give public educational presentations

Follow this link to the Survey:
Take the Survey

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=cGS4uJ04vre8zdO_9SUIh1WGcXp5Pxi&_u=1

APPENDIX H
VOLUNTEER PILOT

Greetings,

In case you haven't heard, I'm working on a Master's Degree at Texas A&M University in Agriculture Education. I am writing an instrument to measure successful Master Gardener speaker's bureaus, best practices of speaker's bureaus and barriers to developing and growing speaker's bureaus. I'm inviting you to help me test the reliability of this instrument, because of your knowledge of the Master Gardener program. If you are willing to complete the survey you will be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 Lowes gift card. The information you provide will be confidential.

For this research, a speaker's bureau is defined as one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public. (It does not have to be a formal committee to be considered a speaker's bureau.) Even if your county Master Gardener Program does not have a Speakers Bureau your comments and feedback will be useful for this study.

Below is a link to the survey, a brief description of the purpose of this study and the objectives this instrument will measure. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jayla Fry

The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. Quantative and qualitative data will be gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers from across the state of Texas. This information will be useful for implementing speaker's bureaus in other Master Gardener groups, extending the capabilities of functioning speaker's bureaus, and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful speaker's bureaus
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener speaker's bureaus
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of speaker's bureaus

Jayla B. Fry
Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2134
(979) 845-3308
jb fry@ag.tamu.edu

Follow this link to the Survey:

Take the Survey

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=8dMvQmsHHTfnto8_0Cz1R7Ivw3utRkw&_ =1

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

Click here to unsubscribe

Master Gardener Volunteer Pilot

Q72 You have been asked to participate in a research project about furthering educational program delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your involvement in the Master Gardener program. If you agree to participate in this study, please answer "yes" to the question below. This study will take less than 30 minutes. The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the Master Gardener program will be better equipped to respond to clientele request for speaker. Your participation is voluntary; in no way are you required to participate. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Master Gardener Program being affected. This study is confidential and will only be used as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Once you have completed the questionnaire, your name will be removed from the survey and cannot be reconnected to their answers. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jayla Fry at (979) 845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu. Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Do you have a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If there were a Speaker's Bureau in y...

Q3 Do you participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Would you like to participate in a Ma...

Q4 What is your role in the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Researcher (1)
- Presentation Preparation (2)
- Presenter (3)
- Manager/Committee Chair (4)
- Scheduler (5)
- Other, please explain. (6) _____

Q5 What topics does your county's Speaker's Bureau cover?

Q6 What style of presentations does your county's Speaker's Bureau offer? Check all that apply.

- Lecture/Speech (1)
- Demonstration (2)
- Workshop/Hands-on (3)
- Other, please explain. (4) _____

Q7 How does your Speaker's Bureau communicate with your clientele about the educational opportunities offered by Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.) (1)
- Word of mouth (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q8 What do you think is the most important reason to have a Speaker's Bureau?

Q13 What are characteristics of a successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q14 How would you rate the efforts of your Speaker's Bureau?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q15 Where would you like the efforts of the Speaker's Bureau to be?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q16 Did you participate in training to prepare yourself to work with a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think training would have help...

Q17 What type of training did you participate in and who offered this training?

If What type of training ... Is Not Empty, Then Skip To What barriers did you face when

begin...If What type of training ... Is Empty, Then Skip To What barriers did you face

when begin...

Q18 Do you think training would have helped you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What barriers did you face when begin...

Q19 What type of training would have helped?

Q20 What barriers did you face when beginning to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q21 What barriers do you continue to face to maintain or grow your efforts in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q43 Do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What is the benefit of the Speaker's ...

Q22 How do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations? Check all that apply.

- Customer Satisfaction Evaluation (1)
- Extension Outcome Evaluation (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q28 Do you report the results of the assessments?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What is the benefit of the Speaker's ...

Q29 Who do you share the results of the assessments? Check all that apply.

- Agent (1)
- Others in the Speaker's Bureau (2)
- Others in the Master Gardener Program (3)
- Others, please explain. (4) _____

Q9 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to you?

Q10 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the agent?

Q11 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the client?

Q12 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the agency?

If What is the benefit of the&... Is Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...If What is the benefit of the&... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q31 Would you like to participate in a Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think SB are important or useful?

Q32 What are the barriers for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q33 Is there any specific training that would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What characteristics would describe a...

Q34 What training would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

If What training would be help... Is Equal to, Then Skip To What characteristics would describe a...If What training would be help... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To What characteristics would describe a...

Q35 Do you think Speaker's Bureaus are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q36 What characteristics would describe a successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q37 Is feedback given from presentations by the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q44 Would you like feedback from the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q38 Do you find the information interesting or helpful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...If No Is

Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q40 If there were a Speaker's Bureau in your county, would you like to participate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To What do think are characteristics of ...

Q45 What reasons would cause you to not want to participate?

Q39 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q46 What do think are characteristics of successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q47 What barriers are there for beginning a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

Q48 Thank you for your time filling out this questionnaire. We welcome any feedback you have about this survey or study. Please add comments below.

APPENDIX I
SECOND VOLUNTEER PILOT

Thank you so much for answering the first survey measuring Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus. Below is a link to the second survey that contains similar questions to the first survey. The purpose of taking the survey twice is to test the reliability of the questionnaire. I know your time is valuable, so this will only take a few minutes and I would greatly appreciate your response. Once you have completed the second survey, you will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Lowe's gift card. The information you provide will be confidential.

For this survey, a Speaker's Bureau is defined as one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public (these can be very informal). Presentations include speeches or lectures, workshops or hand-on activities or demonstrations. These are prepared presentations on topics that are requested or from a list of topics offered. All work going toward the educational effort is considered a part of a Speaker's Bureau.

Thank you again for your time and if you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jayla B. Fry
 Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
 218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
 Texas A&M University
 College Station, TX 77843-2134
 (979) 845-3308
jbfry@ag.tamu.edu

Follow this link to the Survey:

[\\${I://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[\\${I://SurveyURL}](#)

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[\\${I://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}](#)

Master Gardener Volunteer Pilot - reliability

Q72 You have been asked to participate in a research project about furthering educational program delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your involvement in the Master Gardener program. If you agree to participate in this study, please answer "yes" to the question below. This study will take less than 30 minutes. The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the Master Gardener program will be better equipped to respond to clientele request for speaker. Your participation is voluntary; in no way are you required to participate. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Master Gardener Program being affected. This study is confidential and will only be used as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Once you have completed the questionnaire, your name will be removed from the survey and cannot be reconnected to their answers. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jayla Fry at (979) 845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related

problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu. Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Do you have a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If there were a Speaker's Bureau in y...

Q3 Do you participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Would you like to participate in a Ma...

Q4 What is your role in the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Researcher (1)
- Presentation Preparation (2)
- Presenter (3)
- Manager/Committee Chair (4)
- Scheduler (5)
- Other, please explain. (6) _____

Q6 What style of presentations does your county's Speaker's Bureau offer? Check all that apply.

- Lecture/Speech (1)
- Demonstration (2)
- Workshop/Hands-on (3)
- Other, please explain. (4) _____

Q7 How does your Speaker's Bureau communicate with your clientele about the educational opportunities offered by Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.) (1)
- Word of mouth (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q14 How would you rate the efforts of your Speaker's Bureau?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q15 Where would you like the efforts of the Speaker's Bureau to be?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q16 Did you participate in training to prepare yourself to work with a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you assess the effectiveness of yo...

Q18 Do you think training would have helped you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q43 Do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q22 How do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations? Check all that apply.

- Customer Satisfaction Evaluation (1)
- Extension Outcome Evaluation (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q28 Do you report the results of the assessments?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q29 Who do you share the results of the assessments? Check all that apply.

- Agent (1)
- Others in the Speaker's Bureau (2)
- Others in the Master Gardener Program (3)
- Others, please explain. (4) _____

If Agent Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If Others in the

Speaker's Bureau Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If

Others in the Master Garden... Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling

out t...If Others, please explain. Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time

filling out t...If Others, please explain. Is Not Empty, Then Skip To Thank you for your

time filling out t...If Others, please explain. Is Empty, Then Skip To Thank you for your
time filling out t...

Q31 Would you like to participate in a Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think SB are important or useful?

Q33 Is there any specific training that would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Is feedback given from presentat...If Yes Is Selected,

Then Skip To Is feedback given from presentat...

Q35 Do you think Speaker's Bureaus are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q37 Is feedback given from presentations by the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q44 Would you like feedback from the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If Yes Is Selected,

Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q38 Do you find the information interesting or helpful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...If No Is

Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q40 If there were a Speaker's Bureau in your county, would you like to participate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q39 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If No Is Selected,

Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q48 Thank you for your time filling out this questionnaire. We welcome any feedback you have about this survey or study. Please add comments below.

APPENDIX J
VOLUNTEER PILOT TEST/RETEST

Greetings,

In case you haven't heard, I'm working on a Master's Degree at Texas A&M University in Agriculture Education. I am writing an instrument to measure successful Master Gardener speaker's bureaus, best practices of speaker's bureaus and barriers to developing and growing speaker's bureaus. I'm inviting you to help me test the reliability of this instrument, because of your knowledge of the Master Gardener program. If you are willing to complete the survey you will be entered in a drawing to win a \$50 Lowes gift card. The information you provide will be confidential.

For this research, a speaker's bureau is defined as one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public. (It does not have to be a formal committee to be considered a speaker's bureau.) Even if your county Master Gardener Program does not have a Speakers Bureau your comments and feedback will be useful for this study.

Below is a link to the survey, a brief description of the purpose of this study and the objectives this instrument will measure. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jayla Fry

The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. Quantative and qualitative data will be gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers from across the state of Texas. This information will be useful for implementing speaker's bureaus in other Master Gardener groups, extending the capabilities of functioning speaker's bureaus, and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful speaker's bureaus
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener speaker's bureaus
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of speaker's bureaus

Jayla B. Fry
Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2134
(979) 845-3308
jb fry@ag.tamu.edu

Follow this link to the Survey:

Take the Survey

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=8dMvQmsHHTfnto8_0Cz1R7Ivw3utRkw&=1

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

Master Gardener Volunteer Survey - Test/Retest

Q42 You have been asked to participate in a research project about furthering educational program delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your involvement in the Master Gardener program. If you agree to participate in this study, please answer "yes" to the question below. This study will take less than 30 minutes. The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the Master Gardener program will be better equipped to respond to clientele request for speaker. Your participation is voluntary; in no way are you required to participate. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Master Gardener Program being affected. This study is confidential and will only be used as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Once you have completed the questionnaire, your name will be removed from the survey and cannot be reconnected to their answers. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jayla Fry at (979) 845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu. Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes (1)
- No (3)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Do you have a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If there were a Speaker's Bureau in y...

Q3 Do you participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Would you like to participate in a Ma...

Q4 What is your role in the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Researcher (1)
- Presentation Preparation (2)
- Presenter (3)
- Manager/Committee Chair (4)
- Scheduler (5)
- Other, please explain. (6) _____

Q5 What topics does your county's Speaker's Bureau cover?

Q6 What style of presentations does your county's Speaker's Bureau offer? Check all that apply.

- Lecture/Speech (1)
- Demonstration (2)
- Workshop/Hands-on (3)
- Other, please explain. (4) _____

Q7 How does your Speaker's Bureau communicate with your clientele about the educational opportunities offered by Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.) (1)
- Word of mouth (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q8 What do you think is the most important reason to have a Speaker's Bureau?

Q13 What are characteristics of a successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q14 How would you rate the efforts of your Speaker's Bureau?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q15 Where would you like the efforts of the Speaker's Bureau to be?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q16 Did you participate in training to prepare yourself to work with a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think training would have help...

Q17 What type of training did you participate in and who offered this training?

If What type of training ... Is Not Empty, Then Skip To What barriers did you face when

begin...If What type of training ... Is Empty, Then Skip To What barriers did you face

when begin...

Q18 Do you think training would have helped you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What barriers did you face when begin...

Q19 What type of training would have helped?

Q20 What barriers did you face when beginning to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q21 What barriers do you continue to face to maintain or grow your efforts in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q43 Do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What is the benefit of the Speaker's ...

Q22 How do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations? Check all that apply.

- Customer Satisfaction Evaluation (1)
- Extension Outcome Evaluation (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q28 Do you report the results of the assessments?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What is the benefit of the Speaker's ...

Q29 Who do you share the results of the assessments? Check all that apply.

- Agent (1)
- Others in the Speaker's Bureau (2)
- Others in the Master Gardener Program (3)
- Others, please explain. (4) _____

Q9 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to you?

Q10 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the agent?

Q11 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the client?

Q12 What is the benefit of the Speaker's Bureau to the agency?

If What is the benefit of the&... Is Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...If What is the benefit of the&... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q31 Would you like to participate in a Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think SB are important or useful?

Q32 What are the barriers for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

Q33 Is there any specific training that would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What characteristics would describe a...

Q34 What training would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

If What training would be help... Is Equal to, Then Skip To What characteristics would

describe a...If What training would be help... Is Not Equal to, Then Skip To What

characteristics would describe a...

Q35 Do you think Speaker's Bureaus are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q36 What characteristics would describe a successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q37 Is feedback given from presentations by the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q44 Would you like feedback from the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q38 Do you find the information interesting or helpful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...If No Is

Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q40 If there were a Speaker's Bureau in you county, would you like to participate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To What do think are characteristics of ...

Q45 What reasons would cause you to not want to participate?

Q39 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q46 What do think are characteristics of successful Speaker's Bureau?

Q47 What barriers are there for beginning a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

Q48 Thank you for your input to the survey. Would you be willing to answer an additional set of similar questions to confirm our understanding of your previous responses? Your individual responses will not be shared.

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of SurveyIf Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you
have a Speaker's Bureau in you...

Q51 Just to confirm, do you have a Speaker's Bureau in you county?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If there were a Speaker's Bureau in y...

Q55 Again, to clarify, do you participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Would you like to participate in a Ma...

Q57 What is your role in the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Researcher (1)
- Presentation Preparation (2)
- Presenter (3)
- Manager/Committee Chair (4)
- Scheduler (5)
- Other, please explain. (6) _____

Q59 What style of presentations does your county's Speaker's Bureau offer? Check all that apply.

- Lecture/Speech (1)
- Demonstration (2)
- Workshop/Hands-on (3)
- Other, please explain. (4) _____

Q61 How does your Speaker's Bureau communicate with your clientele about the educational opportunities offered by Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.) (1)
- Word of mouth (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q63 How would you rate the efforts of your Speaker's Bureau?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q65 Where would you like your efforts to be?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q67 Did you participate in training to prepare yourself to work with a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you assess the effectiveness of yo...

Q69 Do you think training would have helped you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q71 Do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q73 How do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations? Check all that apply.

- Customer Satisfaction Evaluation (1)
- Extension Outcome Evaluation (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q75 Do you report the results of the assessments?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q77 Who do you tell the results of the assessments? Check all that apply.

- Agent (1)
- Others in the Speaker's Bureau (2)
- Others in the Master Gardener Program (3)
- Others, please explain. (4) _____

If Agent Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
 If Others in the Speaker's Bureau Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
 If Others in the Master Garden... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
 If Others, please explain. Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block
 If Others, please explain. Is Not Empty, Then Skip To End of Block
 If Others, please explain. Is Empty, Then Skip To End of Survey
 If Others in the Speaker's Bureau Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q79 Would you like to participate in a Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q81 Is there any specific training that would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
 If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q83 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q85 Is feedback given from presentations by the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q87 Would you like feedback from the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
 If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q89 Do you find the information interesting or helpful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of
Survey

Q91 If there were a Speaker's Bureau in your county, would you like to participate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q93 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of
Survey

APPENDIX H
VOLUNTEER PILOT RELIABILITY

Master Gardener Volunteer Pilot - reliability

Q72 You have been asked to participate in a research project about furthering educational program delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus. The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your involvement in the Master Gardener program. If you agree to participate in this study, please answer "yes" to the question below. This study will take less than 30 minutes. The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks ordinarily encountered in daily life. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, the Master Gardener program will be better equipped to respond to clientele request for speaker. Your participation is voluntary; in no way are you required to participate. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without your current or future relations with Texas AgriLife Extension Service or The Master Gardener Program being affected. This study is confidential and will only be used as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Once you have completed the questionnaire, your name will be removed from the survey and cannot be reconnected to their answers. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jayla Fry at (979) 845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu. Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. Do you agree to participate in this survey?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 Do you have a Speaker's Bureau in your county?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If there were a Speaker's Bureau in y...

Q3 Do you participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Would you like to participate in a Ma...

Q4 What is your role in the Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Researcher (1)
- Presentation Preparation (2)
- Presenter (3)
- Manager/Committee Chair (4)
- Scheduler (5)
- Other, please explain. (6) _____

Q6 What style of presentations does your county's Speaker's Bureau offer? Check all that apply.

- Lecture/Speech (1)
- Demonstration (2)
- Workshop/Hands-on (3)
- Other, please explain. (4) _____

Q7 How does your Speaker's Bureau communicate with your clientele about the educational opportunities offered by Speaker's Bureau? Check all that apply.

- Purposeful marketing (i.e. radio, newspaper, web, email, etc.) (1)
- Word of mouth (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q14 How would you rate the efforts of your Speaker's Bureau?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q15 Where would you like the efforts of the Speaker's Bureau to be?

- Very Ineffective (1)
- Ineffective (2)
- Neither Effective nor Ineffective (3)
- Effective (4)
- Very Effective (5)

Q16 Did you participate in training to prepare yourself to work with a Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you assess the effectiveness of yo...

Q18 Do you think training would have helped you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q43 Do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations?

- Yes (9)
- No (10)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q22 How do you assess the effectiveness of your presentations? Check all that apply.

- Customer Satisfaction Evaluation (1)
- Extension Outcome Evaluation (2)
- Other, please explain. (3) _____

Q28 Do you report the results of the assessments?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q29 Who do you share the results of the assessments? Check all that apply.

- Agent (1)
- Others in the Speaker's Bureau (2)
- Others in the Master Gardener Program (3)
- Others, please explain. (4) _____

If Agent Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If Others in the

Speaker's Bureau Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If

Others in the Master Garden... Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling

out t...If Others, please explain. Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time

filling out t...If Others, please explain. Is Not Empty, Then Skip To Thank you for your

time filling out t...If Others, please explain. Is Empty, Then Skip To Thank you for your

time filling out t...

Q31 Would you like to participate in a Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you think SB are important or useful?

Q33 Is there any specific training that would be helpful for you to participate in the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Is feedback given from presentat...If Yes Is Selected,

Then Skip To Is feedback given from presentat...

Q35 Do you think Speaker's Bureaus are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q37 Is feedback given from presentations by the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q44 Would you like feedback from the Speaker's Bureau?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If Yes Is Selected,

Then Skip To Do you find the information interesti...

Q38 Do you find the information interesting or helpful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...If No Is

Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your input to the surve...

Q40 If there were a Speaker's Bureau in you county, would you like to participate?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

Q39 Do you think Speaker's Bureau are important or useful?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...If No Is Selected,

Then Skip To Thank you for your time filling out t...

48 Thank you for your time filling out this questionnaire. We welcome any feedback you

have about this survey or study. Please add comments below.

APPENDIX K
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES - OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

1186 TAMU, General Services Complex
 College Station, TX 77843-1186
 750 Agronomy Road, #3500

979.458.1467
 FAX 979.862.3176
<http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu>

Human Subjects Protection Program

Institutional Review Board

APPROVAL DATE: 26-Aug-2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: FRY, JAYLA B
 77843-2116

FROM: Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Initial Review

Protocol Number: 2011-0622

Title: Furthering Educational Program Delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus

Review Category: Expedited

Approval Period: 26-Aug-2011 **To** 25-Aug-2012

Approval determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations:

45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) - Some or all of the research appearing on the list and found by the reviewer(s) to involve no more than minimal risk.

 Criteria for Approval has been met (45 CFR 46.111) - The criteria for approval listed in 45 CFR 46.111 have been met (or if previously met, have not changed).

 (7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language,

communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation or quality assurance methodologies.

(Note: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b) (3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Provisions:

Comments:

This research project has been approved. As principal investigator, you assume the following responsibilities

1. **Continuing Review:** The protocol must be renewed each year in order to continue with the research project. A Continuing Review along with required documents must be submitted 30 days before the end of the approval period. Failure to do so may result in processing delays and/or non-renewal.
2. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the IRB Office.
3. **Adverse Events:** Adverse events must be reported to the IRB Office immediately.
4. **Amendments:** Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment to the IRB Office for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.
5. **Informed Consent:** Information must be presented to enable persons to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in the research project.

This electronic document provides notification of the review results by the Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX L
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AMENDMENT

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES - OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

1186 TAMU, General Services Complex
 College Station, TX 77843-1186
 750 Agronomy Road, #3500

979.458.1467
 FAX 979.862.3176
<http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu>

Human Subjects Protection Program

Institutional Review Board

APPROVAL DATE: 16-Dec-2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: FRY, JAYLA B
 77843-2116

FROM: Office of Research Compliance
 Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Amendment

Protocol Number: 2011-0622

Title: Furthering Educational Program Delivery through Master Gardener Speakers Bureaus

Review Category: Expedited

Approval Period: 16-Dec-2011 **To** 25-Aug-2012

Approval determination was based on the following Code of Federal Regulations:

Modification Eligible for Expedite Review (45 CFR 46.110): The modification(s) do not affect the design of the research AND the modification(s) add no more than minimal risk to subjects.

 (6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation or quality assurance methodologies.

(Note: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b) (3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Provisions:

Comments: Add focus group

This research project has been approved. As principal investigator, you assume the following responsibilities

1. **Continuing Review:** The protocol must be renewed each year in order to continue with the research project. A Continuing Review along with required documents must be submitted 30 days before the end of the approval period. Failure to do so may result in processing delays and/or non-renewal.
2. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the IRB Office.
3. **Adverse Events:** Adverse events must be reported to the IRB Office immediately.
4. **Amendments:** Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment to the IRB Office for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.
5. **Informed Consent:** Information must be presented to enable persons to voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in the research project.

This electronic document provides notification of the review results by the Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX M
AGENT PRE-NOTICE

Dear Master Gardener Coordinators

You will receive an email from Jayla Fry, Texas Master Gardener Coordinator and Master's student at Texas A&M University, who is researching the success of Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus.

The research objectives include determining the best management practices for Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus, and the motivations and barriers to establishing and growing speaker's bureaus.

You will receive a request from Jayla to fill out a survey about your program. Your input and opinions are critical to this research, as well as, determining the best way to create and manage Speaker's Bureaus, now and in the future, in this state and others.

I know you are stretched thin and very busy, but I would ask that you respond quickly to Jayla's request. Her research will be incomplete without your input.

If you have questions, please contact Jayla at (979)845-3308 or jbfry@ag.tamu.edu. We are look forward to the results of this study.

Thank you so much,

Doug

Douglas F. Welsh, Ph.D.
Associate Department Head, Professor and Extension Horticulturist
Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Department of Horticultural Sciences
225 Horticulture/Forestry Building
Mail Stop 2134
College Station, TX 77843-2134
979-845-8568
979-845-8906 fax
dougwelsh@tamu.edu

APPENDIX N
AGENT INVITATION EMAIL

I am inviting you to help me better understand what it takes to have a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureaus. I realize you are busy, but this study is important to the Master Gardener program in Texas and your input is important. I would greatly appreciate your input and expertise.

For this survey, a speaker's bureau is defined as one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public. (It does not have to be a formal committee to be considered a speaker's bureau.) Presentations include speeches or lectures, workshops or hand-on activities or demonstrations. These are prepared presentations on topics that are requested or from a list of topics offered. All work going toward the educational effort is considered a part of a speaker's bureau. If you do not have a speaker's bureau, your information is still critical to this study.

Below is a link to the survey, a brief description of the purpose of this study and the objectives that will be covered. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Jayla Fry
 Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
 218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
 Texas A&M University
 College Station, TX 77843-2134
 (979) 845-3308
jb fry@ag.tamu.edu

The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. Quantative and qualitative data will be gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers from across the state of Texas. This information will be useful for implementing speaker's bureaus in other Master Gardener groups, extending the capabilities of functioning speaker's bureaus, and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful speaker's bureaus
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener speaker's bureaus
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of speaker's bureaus

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=czG5UFNyAzv7WDO_bPmlqxFdj0QkEqo&=1

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

APPENDIX O
AGENT FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

A few days ago we sent a questionnaire asking your thoughts about Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus. To the best of our knowledge, we have not received your response. We understand that you are very busy; however, your opinion is very valuable. This will only take a few minutes of your time. I look forward to your input.

Thank you,
Jayla

Jayla B. Fry
Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2134
(979) 845-3308
jb fry@ag.tamu.edu

The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. Quantative and qualitative data will be gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers from across the state of Texas. This information will be useful for implementing speaker's bureaus in other Master Gardener groups, extending the capabilities of functioning speaker's bureaus, and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful speaker's bureaus
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener speaker's bureaus
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of speaker's bureaus

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=bI8kFdx3NtnHSMQ_bPmlqxFdj0QkEqo&=1

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

APPENDIX P
VOLUNTEER INVITATION EMAIL

I am inviting you to help me better understand successful Master Gardener speaker's bureaus. For this survey, a speaker's bureau does not have to be a formal committee. It can simply be one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public. You also do not have to be active in a speaker's bureau to provide valuable feedback. Anyone in the Texas Master Gardener Program is considered an expert for this study.

I realize you are busy, but this study is important to the Master Gardener program in Texas and your input is valuable. I would greatly appreciate your input into this research. If you would like to know more about the questionnaire or how we will use your responses, please read below the link.

Follow this link to the Survey:

Take the Survey

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=czG5UFNyAzv7WDO_bPmlqxFdj0QkEqo&=1

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=afvdDu210HVtxvm_3PIG54tMyknK4fO&=1

The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener Programs. This information will be used to implement speaker's bureaus in Master Gardener Programs, extend the capabilities of functioning speaker's bureaus, and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful speaker's bureaus
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener speaker's bureaus
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of speaker's bureaus

If you have questions or comments please feel free to contact me. Thank you in advance for your support of this research.

Sincerely,

Jayla Fry
Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.

Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843-2134
(979) 845-3308
jb fry@ag.tamu.edu

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=afvdDu210HVtxvm_3PIG54tMyknK4fO&_ =1

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

APPENDIX Q
VOLUNTEER FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Greetings \${m://FirstName},

A few days ago, I asked you to help me better understand what it takes to have a successful Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus. I realize you are busy, but this study is important to the Master Gardener program in Texas and your input is important. I would greatly appreciate your input and expertise.

For this survey, a speaker's bureau is defined as one or more Master Gardeners giving researched based horticulture information in the form of presentations to the public. (It does not have to be a formal committee to be considered a speaker's bureau.) Presentations include speeches or lectures, workshops or hand-on activities or demonstrations. These are prepared presentations on topics that are requested or from a list of topics offered. All work going toward the educational effort is considered a part of a speaker's bureau. If you do not have a Speaker's Bureau in your county or you do not participate in the Speaker's Bureau in your county, your information is still critical to this study.

Follow this link to the Survey:

[\\${l://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[\\${l://SurveyURL}](#)

Below is a brief description of the purpose of this study and the objectives that will be covered. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Jayla Fry
 Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
 218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
 Texas A&M University
 College Station, TX 77843-2134
 (979) 845-3308
jbfry@ag.tamu.edu

The purpose of this study is to describe a successful Master Gardener speaker's bureau and to understand obstacles and challenges that limit the development and growth of the speaker's bureaus within Master Gardener programs. Quantative and qualitative data will be gathered from County Extension Agents, Master Gardener Coordinators and Master Gardener volunteers from across the state of Texas. This information will be useful for implementing speaker's bureaus in other Master Gardener groups, extending the capabilities of functioning speaker's bureaus, and be relayed to other Extension volunteer programs for growth and development.

The following objectives were developed to achieve this research:

1. Identify characteristics of successful speaker's bureaus
2. Identify the best practices of volunteer coordinators and members of Master Gardener speaker's bureaus
3. Identify barriers to development and growth of speaker's bureaus

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APPENDIX R

VOLUNTEER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION EMAIL

Greetings,

I cannot thank you enough for your response to the initial Master Gardener survey and for your support of this research. There were such overwhelming positive results and comments that I would like to follow up with you on some additional “thought” questions. There will be 2 or 3 of the same questions that you saw before, but they are only to direct you to the correct “thought” question. So please don’t feel that you will be taking the same survey as before. Again, thank you for your input and I know your response will help us improve our Master Gardener program. I look forward to your input.

Sincerely,

Jayla B. Fry

Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
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APPENDIX S
VOLUNTEER NON-RESPONSE EMAIL

Greetings,

For the past three weeks I have sent you a survey that asked for your input on Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus. To the best of my knowledge, I have not received your input.

I have received excellent input from other Master Gardeners who are active in their county Speaker's Bureau, who are not active in their Speaker's Bureau and from those who do not have a Speaker's Bureau in their county at all. Even though we have had excellent input from others, your input will help ensure our results are accurate. Your thoughts are very important to me.

You may be wondering what a Speaker's Bureau is. A Speaker's Bureau is one or more volunteers giving public educational presentations. It does not have to be a formal committee. Everyone who is a Texas Master Gardener can provide input into this survey.

Your answers are completely confidential and will only be used as summaries.

Thank you in advance for your participation. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,
Jayla B. Fry
Texas Master Gardener Coordinator
218 Horticulture/Forestry Sciences Build.
Texas A&M University
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(979) 845-3308
jbfry@ag.tamu.edu

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

http://tamuag.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=3VgxBUPD0Cc7s8Y_a59xQH2C6d6ByCg&_=1

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APPENDIX T
SUMMARY OF RESULTS EMAIL

Good morning,

Last year you were asked participated in a questionnaire to improve Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus. To follow up with you, I would like to share with you a summary of the collective data gathered from the questionnaire. Please be assured that no individual information is revealed and your information remains confidential. Attached is that summary that is organized into overall research suggestions, research objectives and final recommendations for improving Speaker's Bureaus. I would greatly appreciate if you could review the summary and return any corrections, additions, or changes to me by early next week. I am in the final stages of writing my thesis and your review of this information is extremely important for verification of the material I include in the final document. Again thank you for your time, continual support of the Master Gardener Program, and to me as I complete my thesis research.

Sincerely,

Jayla

Jayla B. Fry

Texas Master Gardener Coordinator

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(979) 845-3308

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Summary of Roundtable Results

General information

Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus have grown over the last several years. 80 % has been around less than 10 years.

The meaning of Speaker's Bureau is easily misinterpreted

The meaning of Speaker's Bureaus could be different styles of presentation, different roles, few presenters, etc.

Compare volunteer and agents who have Speaker's Bureaus and volunteers and agents without Speaker's Bureaus

Compare urban counties and rural counties

Bias in coding-have others code

Two student workers coded the information.

Compare agents who answered that their Speaker's Bureaus are ineffective to those who assist with the efforts of their SB.

All who answered that they were ineffective said they assisted. All but one said they were involved with their SB. One said they were neither involved nor uninvolved.

Unfilled requests for agents without a Speaker's Bureau means that either their volunteers speak and fill the request (so why no Speaker's Bureau) or there is no requests.

Quote good and bad examples

Postulate what you think about the ineffective responses and present all thoughts for explanations

Suggestions for future research:

Give "o" or "none" as an option

Give options for what "ineffective" is

Not helping agent is very ineffective

Twist volunteers arm is ineffective

Can be a clique (if only 2-3 volunteer that suggests a clique)

Rural vs. Urban comparison

Don't assume everyone in the Speaker's Bureau speaks

Define Presentations. This may include booths at county fairs, tours, etc.

Ask how long they have been a volunteer

May need experience as a Master Gardener to feel confident enough to speak

Need time to build up knowledge

Ask how many topics along with what topics are offered

Agent Data

Successful Speaker's Bureaus

Offer a variety of timely topics

Trust volunteers to teach Extension subject matter

Subject matter vs. presentation skills

Volunteer knowledge of subject matter is key

Can teach subject matter, but if a volunteer has knowledge of a subject should recruit that person to teach (volunteer not wanting to speak will be a barrier)

Speaking skills are second to subject matter. "Audience will forgive speaking skills if information is valuable"

Need both subject matter knowledge and speaking skills to be successful

Agents without Speaker's Bureau feel speaking skills are more important than subject matter

Best Practices

Coordinating themselves is directly related to effectiveness

Recruiting those with career experience

Review presentation material

Agent should

Agent doesn't have time, but trusts volunteer to deliver research based info.

Recruit well and have canned presentations

Advertise your presentations

Utilize social media to market Speaker's Bureau

Simplify evaluation methods

Show volunteers what the agent has to report to help them understand how their efforts fit in

Instead of being reactive to requests, offer a list of timely, relevant topics to choose from

Alternative training options

Include speaking skills training in initial Master Gardener training course

Have Master Gardener work together to present info in training class

Volunteer's attitude about speaking can be adopted from agent

Barrier

Agent doesn't buy into the need for a Speaker's Bureau

Technology issues

Offer a variety of presentation methods; not all have to have a ppt. or use a computer

Lack of leadership or organization

Volunteer Data

Successful Speaker's Bureau

Unanimously all feel Speaker's Bureaus are important

Most all volunteers in the program value the effort of those in the SB even if they do not want to participate

Subject matter vs. speaking skills

Participants in the Speaker's Bureaus feel knowledge is more important

Those who do not participate feel both knowledge and presentation skills are important

Best Practices

Utilize volunteers with career experience

Training is needed but not sure what would have helped

Recruit for specific jobs-computer skills, researcher, etc.

Working in pairs or teams

Barriers

Volunteers adopt attitude of agent

No barrier may mean the agent is not interested

Do not want to be successful

Lack training or alternative forms of training

46% did not perceive that they received training

Volunteers who do not participate "do not want to"

Volunteer's perception of their abilities

Technology is a barrier

Time is a barrier

Lack of leadership or organization

Summary

Speaker's Bureaus are unanimously considered important by agents and volunteers

Master Gardeners currently give a lot of presentations

Utilize successful Master Gardener Speaker's Bureau to expand success into other Master Gardener Programs, other Extension Programs, and other volunteer organizations.

Suggestions for improvement of Speaker's Bureau at state level

Offer kits or "canned" presentations

Offer modules on speaking skills, how to create a ppt., how and when to use logos, etc. that any Master Gardener can utilize

Write reports that are based on need of the Speaker's Bureau.

Different needs will be based on whether the Speaker's Bureau is established or just beginning

Articles in magazines such as Texas Gardener promoting Master Gardener Speaker's Bureaus to the state

May need a Speaker's Bureau task force to accumulate information and package

VITA

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