



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

President's Message:

January, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 1

**Garden Party
Wednesday,
January 4,
1:00 p.m.
Extension Office**

Meet and Greet
New '06 Class Members.
Wear your Garden Hat.
The new officers will
be installed.

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Hi everyone! I hope you and your family enjoyed this season. It's such a special time of the year to think back on all our blessings and to look forward. Speaking of which, Harold, Sharon, Carol and I are looking forward to the coming year and to working with all of you to accomplish our stated mission, and to enjoy a year of fellowship and fun while helping our community. The Executive Committee will be meeting after each monthly meeting, so if you have ideas or concerns, please let us know so that they might be addressed.

Also, I am going to ask all the committee chairs to meet quarterly, also after the regular meeting, so we all will know what is happening in all phases of the organization, and we can make decisions as a team to move the HGMG forward. There is an updated list of all the committee chairs in this newsletter.

We also want to thank, once again, the outgoing officers for a year of hard work. We are excited about building on their progress this coming year.

Also, to the Committee Chairs who are taking a sabbatical, we want to thank you for your hard work. Tommie and Eileen, have a great year and some well deserved time off. Tony, Pam, Martha and Tommie (for nominating committee) will continue

to do their superb jobs. Debbie Russell has agreed to be the Education Chairman, Phyllis Knight, the Program Chairman, and Judy Simmons, the Mentoring Chairman. Thanks to all of you for your help.

You should have received the background check forms in the mail by now. Please complete them and have them back in the extension office by January 1, along with your \$10.00 check. This is now a requirement of the Texas MGs and the Extension Office, and we appreciate your cooperation.

The new class is forming, and it looks like we will have 15 enthusiastic students. On January 4, at our regular meeting, we will meet and greet them. Please bring a small goodie so we can socialize and get to know them while we enjoy the good food all of us bring to these occasions. Also, wear your favorite gardening hat.

It's that time of the year again for everyone to pay their dues. They are \$18.00 and we would appreciate it if you could bring a check to the January meeting. We have to pay dues to State by March, so it is important to get your money in. Thanks for your help in that.

We are forming a committee to review our current by-laws, and recommend changes if needed. Tommie Airhart

is chairing this committee, so if you have any opinions, please let her know so your input can be included.

The March meeting date is being changed to the 7th in order to take advantage of Darlene Locke, who will do her presentation on Volunteering and Working with People. Please mark your calendars.

The convention planning committee is continuing their great work. We have decided to have tote bags as our give away. Carol Johnson is working with the folks from the 4-H Scholarship Committee to personalize the bags by sewing fabric on the boots, and highlighting the spurs. They are going to be really unique and fun, and we are grateful to the Scholarship Committee for doing this for us. We, in turn, will be making a donation to their Scholarship Fund, so we will be helping them out in that way. In addition, the 4-H group will be catering our big banquet Friday night of the convention. What a terrific way to make a statement about who we are and what we do!

I'll see you all on January 4, 2006. Happy New Year!!
by Anne Brown

HCMG Website of the Month

www.texasoakwilt.org - Much information about oak wilt including pictures can be found on this website. Additional information on oak wilt can be found at the Texas Forest Service web site at <http://texasforestservice.tamu.edu/forest/oakwilt/default.asp>.

Submitted by Anne Brown



Oak Wilt Information

by Anne Brown

Oak wilt, one of the most destructive tree diseases in the United States, is caused by a fungus, *Ceratocystis fagacearum*. This fungus invades and disables the water conducting system of oak trees and greatly reduces the flow of water up the stem of the tree.

Oak wilt was first identified in 1944 and is not unique to any one region or state. The disease is thought to have started in the eastern part of the United States and has been diagnosed in some twenty states, and, fortunately, has not been identified in other countries.

All species of oaks are thought to be susceptible to oak wilt in some degree, but red oaks -- particularly Spanish oak, Texas red oak, shumard oak, and blackjack oak -- are extremely susceptible. White oaks -- post oak, bur oak and Chinkapin oak -- have proven resistant to the fungus. Live oaks are intermediate in susceptibility, but can be seriously affected because of their

network of interconnected root systems which allows the fungus to move among adjacent trees.

The mortality rate varies among the different kinds of oaks. Red oaks die very quickly from the disease, usually within three to four weeks of symptoms appearing. Live oaks die after one to six months of symptoms appearing. Approximately 10 percent of live oaks may survive for several years in various states of decline.

If oak wilt is suspected, samples should be sent to Texas A&M for diagnosed by laboratory analysis there.

Control of oak wilt is aided by several approaches. Prevention of new infections by eliminating diseased red oaks is of greatest importance. Affected red oak trees should be cut down and burned. Pruning properly and at the right time is critical. Never prune trees in the spring --extremely cold or hot

weather is best, and always paint the wound immediately. Trenching to disrupt root connections can help stop spread of the fungus. Injecting appropriate trees with a fungicide can prevent the tree from becoming affected. The best and most effective approach, sadly, is planting tree which are not susceptible to the fungus.

Oak wilt damaged limbs or logs can be used for firewood, with some appropriate cautions. Red oak wood should be covered in plastic and allowed to sit for one year. If you purchase firewood, do not purchase red oak. Live oak wood is all right to purchase and burn. The difference between the two is red oaks form fungal mats under the bark, which can and do easily spread. Live oaks transmit the disease in their roots and therefore the wood is safe to burn.

KUDOS TO ...

Outgoing 2005 Executive Board members Fay Drozd, President; Tony Pacini, VP; Diane Whitney, Secretary; and Barbara Robbins, Treasurer. We appreciate your dedication and hard work this past year.

New 2006 Executive Board Members Anne Brown, President; Harold Pieratt, VP; Sharon Johnson, Secretary; and Carol Johnson, Treasurer. We are all looking forward to the new year and new projects.

Outgoing Chairs - Tommie Airhart, Volunteer Hours Recordkeeping; and Eileen Haden, Programs. Both have done outstanding jobs as Chairs of these committees.

New Chairs – Fay Drozd, Jr. Master Gardeners Committee; Ida Luckey, Volunteer Hours Recordkeeping; Phyllis Knight, Programs Committee; and Debbie Russell, Education Committee.

Our Continuing Chairs – Pam Bresler, Horticultural Inquiry Committee; Christine Millar, Hill Country Garden Book Publication; Tony Pacini, Greenhouse & Market Days; and Martha Stevens, Newsletter .

Carol Biggs ... at long last we have our very own website thanks to her determination and hard work! members will go direct to our website each month to download and print the newsletter.

Fay Drozd, Harold Pieratt and John Osborn. They will be teaching classes on Plant Propagation, ornamental Grasses and garden roses, respectively, at Kerrville I.S.D. club Ed. Their teaching stipends will go to our club treasury.

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A garden is never so
good
as it will be next
year . . .

"Meet and Greet" Garden Party

January 4, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office. All members are urged to come and meet the new class of '06. Wear your garden hat and bring a munchie. We'll have time to socialize and get to know our new students.



Calendar of Events: (Attendance at events other than Master Gardener Meetings is optional; events are listed for those wishing to attend other educational offerings)

January 3, 2006 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, will meet at 2:00 p.m. at the Riverside Nature Center (RNC), 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville.

January 4 – HCMG State Convention Committee Chairs meet at the Extension Office at 10:00 a.m. to discuss progress of the 2007 Texas Master Gardeners Convention.

January 4 – HCMG Education Committee meets at the Extension Office at 12:00 noon.

January 4 – HCMG'S "MEET and GREET" Garden Party at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office. We'd like all our members to attend. It's our chance to put our best foot forward and make the members of the '06 class feel welcome. Don't forget to wear your favorite garden hat!

January 4 – HCMG Executive Committee and Committee Chairs will meet immediately following the Garden Party at the Extension Office.

January 7 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Bandera Chapter, will meet at 2:00 p.m. at the Medina Community Library meeting room, in Bandera.

January 11 – Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Central Tex Electric Co-Op Bldg, 386 Friendship Lane, Fredericksburg. Marie Palmer will

speaking on "Herbs in the Landscape."

January 17 – HCMG 2006 Classes Begin at Kerr County Extension Office at 1:00 pm.

January 17 – Kerr Cactus and Succulent Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.

January 20 – Deadline for HCMG newsletter articles (send to Martha at hnews@ktc.com)

January 23 – Texas Master Naturalists meet in Kerrville. Location & time TBA. The scheduled speaker is David Langford.

January 31 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter, meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg, 312 W San Antonio St., Fredericksburg. Sue Tracy will present a program on "The Native Ferns of Texas."

February 1 – HCMG monthly meeting at 2:00 p.m. at the Extension Office.

March 7 – HCMG monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 7, instead of the first Wednesday of the month. Meet at the Extension Office at 1:00 p.m. We're combining the monthly meeting and the class presented by Darlene Locke on "Volunteering & Working with People."

Committees

Education:

Debbie Russell, Chair;
Cheri Bolden, Fay
Drozd, Otis Fox,
Eileen Haden, Ida
Luckey, Sandra Martin,
Mary Allen Meriwether,
Judy Russell, Judy
Simmons, Huibert Van
Demmeltraadt, Beverly
Weidenfeller

Greenhouse/Market

Days:

Tony Pacini, Chair

Horticultural Inquiry:

Pam Bresler-chair
Carol Johnson, Betty
West,
Judy Simmons

Jr. Master Gardeners

Committee – Fay
Drozd

Newsletter:

Martha Stevens-editor
Carol Seminara-
assistant editor
Contributors: Betty
West, Carol Biggs,
Anne Brown,
Jane Clint

Nominating:

Tommie Airhart-chair

Program:

Phyllis Knight, Chair

Volunteer

Hours/Record

Keeping:

Ida Luckey, Chair

Mentoring:

H/C Garden Book

Publication:

Christine Millar, Chair

Education Committee

Instructors, speakers and field trips for the 2006 slate of HCMG classes (see schedule in last month's newsletter for details) have been confirmed by the Education Committee. Members of that committee under Chairperson Debbie Russell include Cheri Bolden, Fay Drozd, Otis Fox, Eileen Haden, Ida Luckey, Sandra Martin, Mary Allen Meriwether, Judy Russell, Judy Simmons, Huibert VanDemmeltraadt and Beverly Weidenfeller.

Classes for 2006 meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 - 5 p.m., with a refreshment break from 2:30 - 3 p.m. and a Q&A at approximately 4:30 p.m. As before, classes will meet at the Kerr Extension Office, unless otherwise noted on the class schedule, and around 25 Interns are expected to participate in this year's training.

Additionally, this year Judy Simmons is initiating a Phone Desk Mentoring program . On March 16, the Interns will have a special class dedicated to phone desk duty. At that time, each Intern will be assigned a mentor from a select group that specializes in phone desk duty. The Interns will get on-the-job training for their initial phone desk workday.

Phone Desk Calendar Report

Now that we're experiencing cooler weather, we no longer need as much phone desk coverage. Roy Walston says we can eliminate Fridays from our phone desk days through March, but we still need volunteers for the open Monday and Wednesday dates. If you can spare a couple of hours, please sign up in the infamous "blue binder" or e-mail me at dwest@omniglobal.net.

by: Betty West, Phone Desk Calendar

Volunteer Hours Record Keeping Program

Last call for 2005 HCMG Volunteer Hours! Remember your 2005 hours must be turned in to Tommie Airhart by January 1, 2006. Your hours can not be carried forward to 2006. These hours are very important to Roy Walston for his year-end report.

Remember you can go to our website and file your hours via e-mail. If computers aren't your "thing," then you may also place your hard copies in my tray in the HCMG office.

I'll be turning over the Chair position of this committee to Ida Luckey in January, 2006.

by: Tommie Airhart, Chair

Greetings

I am glad to inform everyone that Carol Biggs has been able to add to the Master Gardeners website the time keeping sheets for the volunteer hours.

As of January 1, 2006, I will be keeping track of the volunteer hours for all Hill Country Master Gardeners. I would appreciate it if everyone would go to the website, www.hillcountrymastergardeners.org click on members only. Using the password hcmg, you can then download the form and save it to your word documents. You will be able to type in your hours directly onto the form. It would be more efficient if you would then email the form to me at wgluckey@aol.com . You may also leave the form in my inbox at the Extension Office.

Please do not hesitate to email me with any questions or suggestions. Thank you,

by: Ida Luckey, New chair

HCMG CLASS SCHEDULE - YEAR 2006

<u>Class Date</u>	<u>Subject/Program</u>	<u>Brought to you by:</u>
Tu, Jan 17	Orientation, Introduction	MG Officers/MG Members
Tu, Jan. 24	MG Program	Roy Walston, Ext. Agt.
Th, Jan. 26	Plant Growth & Development	Dr. Charles Stichler
Tu, Jan. 31	Concepts of Insect Mgmt.	Dr. Noel Troxclair
Th, Feb. 2	Concepts of Disease Mgmt.	Dr. Mark Black
	Landscape Design	Dusty Gilliam (MG) & Katherine Crawford (Golden Eagle)
Tu, Feb. 7	Landscape Plant Materials	Dr. Larry Stein
	Pruning, Fruit & Nut Production	
Th, Feb. 9	Field Trip - Hydroponics	B.B. Browning (MG)
Tu, Feb. 14	Vegetable Gardening	Dr. Jerry Parsons
Th, Feb. 16	Soils & Fertilizers	Dr. Charles Stichler
Tu, Feb. 21	Organic Gardening	Melinda Kneese (Oma's)
Th, Feb. 23	Turf Grasses and Care	Dr. Roger Havlak
Tu, Feb. 28	Hunt School Jr. Master Gardener Program	Marilyn Butcher (Hunt Garden Club)
Th, Mar. 2	Trees – Meet at Riverside Nature Center	Susan Sander, Texas Forest Service
Tu, Mar. 7	Volunteering & Working with People; Texas Cooperative Extension; the Master Gardener Program	Darlene, Locke, Ext. Agt. Brownwood, TX - "Personality Profiling"
Th, Mar. 9	Field trip to Medina Gardens	Ernesto Carino & Ysmael Espinoza
Tu, Mar 14	Plant Propagation Workshop	Fay Drozd, MG

Background Checks

I know some of you have been concerned about the criminal background checks that we recently requested. There are two main areas of concern which have been expressed to me. The first is that initially the only ones who had to have the checks were people who worked with the JMG program and now everyone does. The second issue is that a social security number, or at least a part of it, is required. I have also heard questions as to why a volunteer has to bear the expense of the checks.

With these concerns in mind, I met with Roy, who has nothing to do with this requirement, and we found out that there is a great deal of confusion at A&M about just what the policy is. In fact, there is to be a meeting in mid January to address this very issue, which hopefully will provide some clarity.

I am proposing that we table this discussion until we get some concrete statement (which we thought we had anyway) about just what the policy is. With everyone's approval, I will put it on the agenda for the February meeting and everyone, please do not send in the form until we get clarification and have had time to discuss this in a meeting. If you have already submitted the form, it is safely locked up in the Extension Office.

Roy and I also talked about the possibility of using another entity to perform the background checks, one who might not require a social security number, so we are working on that also.

Hope everyone has a very Merry Christmas, great Holidays, and a better New Year. Sorry for the confusion about this, and we will see you on January 4.

Anne Brown, President

**Hill Country Master Gardener Association
2005 Executive Committee**

Anne Brown – President
Harold Pieratt - Vice President
Sharon Johnson - Secretary
Carol Johnson - Treasurer
Fay Drozd - Ex-officio Advisor
Roy Walston - C. E. O. Advisor

Of Leaf & Limb Newsletter

Editor - Martha Stevens
Assistant Editor - Carol Seminara
Contributors – Fay Drozd, Betty West, Carol Biggs
Anne Brown.
Jane Clint

Comments, Submissions...

We welcome and encourage any comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter. Also, if you would like to submit an article for an upcoming edition, please send to: hnews@kctc.com. Indicate "Editor HCMG Newsletter" in the subject line.