



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

April, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 4

Wednesday,
April 5,
1:00 p.m.

Extension Office

Speaker:

Mark Klym of Texas Parks & Wildlife presents a program on "Hummingbirds and Native Plants."

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President's Message:

Hi Everyone,

Happy almost spring to you all. A big congratulations to our 2006 class of students who are now interns. We have fourteen new people who are busy answering the phone for the Extension Office and doing other volunteer hours. All the interns are being mentored their first time on the phone. Thanks to Judy Simmons for managing this process, and to all the people who are serving as mentors.

You all might have noticed the plowed ground at the office. We are in the first stages of establishing a demonstration plant and turf garden. John Osborn has designed the garden, and you will hear more details of the project at the April meeting. Ida Luckey, Randy Simmons, Cheri Bolden, Fay Drozd, Tony Pacini, B. B. Browning and Marguerite Belec all volunteered some time raking dead grass from the area. We will need more people to help with this project as time goes on, so be prepared

Planning for the convention is progressing. Most of us on this committee are going to the 2006 convention in May at Texas A&M. We want to find out all we can about what goes on so we can be prepared for next year. Many MGs are serving as chairs for the various committees for the convention and have put in and are putting in lots of time and effort to get organized for this big event. Roy led the group in deciding which hotel would best suit our needs as our host hotel. We have chosen the Inn of the Hills. We have also contracted with the YO for a special room rate. Fay Drozd is chairing both the awards banquet and protocol committees. John Osborn is in charge of the exhibitors and silent auction. Carol Johnson and Beverly Weidenfelder are heading up the hospitality committee. Cheri Bolden is in charge of meals and snacks. Carol Biggs and Carol Seminara are doing publicity. Tommie Airhart and Carol Johnson are responsible for registration, and Tommie is also heading up volunteer

coordination. Dusty Gillam is tracking down speakers. Annese Thomas is busily fund raising. Liz Althaus is arranging for the tours, and Harold Pierrat is managing the transportation needs. A huge thanks to all these folks who are working so hard to insure that we host a great convention. Also, many thanks to the people who are working with each committee chair.

The Riverside Nature Center is having an Earth Day Celebration and has invited us to participate, so we will be setting up a table at Riverside Nature Center on April 22. It is a good opportunity to let the community know who we are. If you would like to help us man the table, please contact me.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the meeting.

Anne Brown



What I Did on My Spring Break Vacation

by Carol Seminara

My good intention this month was to write about the glories of that super herb, garlic: its history as a medicinal and culinary plant and values as a super food, with cultivation information provided by HCMG colleague Cheri Bolden.

Instead, I decided to share how I spent my Spring Break.

Joe had to go to Miami for three days of computer workshops at the end of March. I'd been to Florida many times while working for Disney, but most of my Sunshine State hours were logged in Orlando. I'd never been farther south than the Salvador Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, so I tagged along for a couple of days of mini-vacation.

Throughout the city you still see remnants of destruction from last October's Hurricane Wilma, which joined Katrina and Rita as among the five or six strongest storms on record. Several buildings sport bald spots where roofing tiles were blown off, awnings are torn or missing, some windows are boarded up with plywood, while many retain the patterns of wide tape applied to prevent the glass panes from exploding in the up-to-110 mph winds. And, of course, everywhere you look you find damaged or downed trees, tattered shrubs and bromeliads, and holes in otherwise lush landscapes.

I'd picked up some info on Fruit & Spice Park, a tropical botanical garden owned and operated by the Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Dept. that featured more than 500 varieties of fruits, vegetables, spices, herbs and nuts. Visitors, so the pamphlet read, were invited to "munch their way through this tropical paradise, enjoying

fruits in season." Just my kind of adventure.

Our B&B host, however, suggested if we only had time to visit one garden that we see the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables, established in 1938 to explore, explain and conserve the world's tropical plants. In addition to 83 acres of palms, cycads, flowers trees and vines, the garden was hosting a art exhibition by world-famous glass artist Dale Chihuly.

Chihuly at Fairchild features hundreds of organically shaped glass sculptures installed among the Fairchild's gardens, arboretum and two conservatories. The exhibit is sponsored by Target and features some of Chihuly's best-loved series, including Macchia, Ikebana and Chandeliers, as well as some new works such as his Neon Tumbleweeds.

It's a spectacular exhibit in an astonishing setting. Chihuly's works are extravagant and vivid, and perfectly complement, rather than compete with, the showy display of tropical plants. Chihuly said, "I want my work to appear like it came from nature." And it does! Imagine a path winding through a lush forest of ferns, bromeliads and orchids and coming upon a cluster of four-foot tall pieces, looking like emerging crystal fronds. Or a hornets' nest of blown chartreuse glass hanging from a large oak tree. Or stylized cobalt glass herons emerging from a lily pool.

But Chihuly at the Fairchild only runs through May, while the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden is open year-round and features a wealth of classes, research seminars and programs, not to mention docent-guided tours.

We spent almost three hours touring the Fairchild, once by tram and once on foot. Needless to say, I now have more information than I ever knew I wanted on the baobab tree (the Fairchild has two, one of which is 70 years old and approximately 10 feet in circumference). We saw a recently emerged queen Monarch drying her wings, caterpillars feeding on a native cycad that was once used in the manufacture of animal crackers, and countless lizards sunning themselves on rocks, plants and art pieces.

Throughout the garden, workers, volunteers and researchers were busy clearing leaf litter, gathering specimens and taking cuttings. The Fairchild is an acknowledged leader in tropical plant research and is an active member in several national and international botanic conservation groups. The Shop at the Fairchild features a "members only" research library, plus books for sale on every aspect of botany and gardening, as well as tropically themed gift items.

To sample the wealth of information the Fairchild has to share, including a virtual herbarium and extensive guide to palms, visit their Web site at: <http://www.ftg.org> <<http://www.ftg.org>>. You can also preview the Chihuly exhibit there.

I'll be posting some of our photos from the Fairchild on my Web site at: <http://carolsworld.tv> <<http://carolsworld.tv>>. And my foodie friends (you know who you are) will want to corner me for details of all the luscious meals I managed to fit into a day and a half.

[
 Who bends a knee where violets grow
 A hundred secret things shall know.
 ----"A Charm for Spring Flowers," *Poems*, Rachel Field, 1957
]



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

April 1 - Fredericksburg Garden Club and Native Plant Society of Fredericksburg are co-hosting a plant sale at the Marktplatz in Fredericksburg, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., or until sold out. Trees, shrubs, veggies, herbs, etc.

April 1 - "Mostly Native Plant Sale" at Cibolo Nature Center, 1 City Park Road (off Hwy 46, east of Boerne) sponsored by Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter, from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

April 1 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Bandera County Chapter, meets 2:00 p.m. at the Medina Community Library meeting room, in Medina. John Rogers will present a pruning workshop. Contact Susan Tracy, (830) 589-7124 for information.

April 4 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, will meet at 2:00 p.m., Riverside Nature Center (R.N.C.), 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville. Sandra Magee will discuss "Spring-blooming Texas Hill Country Wildflowers."

April 4 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter, meets at 7:00 p.m., Cibolo Nature Center (address above). Presentation on "Kew Gardens Seed Bank Project" by Minnette Marr, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center native seed collection specialist.

April 5 - HCMG State Convention Committee Chairs meet 10:00 a.m. at the Extension Office to discuss progress of the 2007 Texas Master Gardeners Convention.

April 5 - HCMG monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office. Mark Klym of Texas Parks & Wildlife presents a program on "Hummingbirds and Native Plants."

April 5 – HCMG Committee Chairs meet with the Executive Committee at the Extension Office after the monthly meeting ends.

April 8 – Cibolo Nature Center "Second Saturday Nature Walk" – 9:30 a.m. at Cibolo Nature Center near Boerne (address above).

April 8 & 9 – "Wildflower Days Spring Plant Sale & Gardening Festival" at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin. See www.wildflower.org for details.

April 12 - Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Central TX Electric Co-Op Bldg, 386 Friendship Lane, Fredericksburg. "Olive tree farming in Texas" presented by Sandy Winokur

April 18 - Kerr Cactus and Succulent Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.

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

April 22 – Kerr County Market Days at Kerr County Courthouse, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Hill Country Master Gardeners will have a booth and lots of plants for sale. Drop by early to get the best selection for your Spring planting!

April 22 – "Earth Day" at Riverside Nature Center in Kerrville, native plant sale, informative programs, star party and other activities.

April 24 – Texas Master Naturalists meet in Kerrville at Riverside Nature Center at 7:00 p.m.

April 25 - 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.

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, Ida Luckey,

Anne Brown,

Pam Bresler, Roy

Walston

Nominating:

Tommie Airhart-chair

Program:

Phyllis Knight, Chair

Volunteer

Hours/Record

Keeping:

Ida Luckey, Chair

Mentoring:

Judy Simmons-Chair

H/C Garden Book

Publication:

Christine Millar, Chair

Volunteer Hours Record Keeping Program

Master Gardeners in order to retain the title of Master Gardener, a volunteer must complete 12 volunteer service hours plus 6 hours of training per year.

Congratulations to Beverly Weidenfeller and Betty West for having completed, by February, their required hours for recertification for 2006.

Master Gardeners, all volunteer work is to be reported monthly to the Chairperson of the Tracking Committee, using the form provided. Complete a separate sheet for each month and submit by the last day of each month. Always remember to retain a copy for your files. You may use the form online or pick up a copy from the Extension Office.

Thanks from John

In the three months I've been hospitalized, many of you have sent cards, flowers, and have visited. Anne and I really appreciate all of this, and it has been a great source of inspiration during the darkest hours of my recovery. It is truly humbling to be associated with such a caring group of people.

With sincere thanks,
John Coleman

Show Your HCMG Colors

Denim shirts sporting an embroidered HCMG logo with 2007 Conference date can be ordered through Anne Brown. Cost of the shirts is \$25. The short-sleeved shirts are available in women's or men's sizes Small, Medium or Large; the men's shirts have a left breast pocket. When placing your order, please specify size and style (men's or women's). Make checks payable to HCMG and submit payment and order info, including your name and contact info, to Anne.

**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
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Assistant Editor -
Carol Seminara
Contributors –Betty
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Anne Brown, Pam
Bresler, Ida Luckey,
Roy Walston

***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@ktc.com.
Indicate "Editor
HCMG
Newsletter" in the
subject line.

HCMG March 7, 2006 Monthly Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Anne Brown at 1:00 p.m. on March 7, 2006.

1. Volunteer Opportunity. There is an opportunity to have a MG booth at the Riverside Nature Center Earth Day celebration on April 22. Anyone interested should contact Anne.
2. Forms. Copies of all forms are available in the MG office. There is a new form that should be filled out by anyone giving a presentation. The form for ordering 2007 Convention denim shirts was distributed to the group. Cost of the shirts is \$25.00. A check must accompany the form for anyone ordering. Forms and checks should be turned in to Anne.
3. Louisiana mulch. The e-mail that was circulated regarding termite infested Louisiana mulch is likely a hoax. It is illegal to ship wood out of Louisiana. Word of caution--buy your mulch from a reputable dealer.
4. 2005 Volunteer Hours. Total hours volunteered in 2005 by certified Master Gardeners in the chapter was 3,873.25. This figure does not include 2005 intern volunteer hours.
5. Market Days. Tony reported that the Market Days dates will be posted in the MG office.

The meeting was adjourned and followed by a presentation by Darlene Locke on Volunteering & Working With People.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon K Johnson

HCMG Website of the Month

Digital Dragonflies
<http://www.dragonflies.org>
Great photos on this site about dragonflies and damselflies and how they relate to water quality issues.