



# Of Leaf & Limb

## Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

*"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"*

April, 2005

Volume 3, Issue 5

Meeting  
Wednesday,  
April 6, 2005  
1:00 p.m.

at the extension office.

Bill Lindemann will  
speak on birds  
of this area.

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### President's Message:

"Spring is busting out all over" as the song goes. The hills are dressing themselves in shades of green as the buds begin to break. The redbuds add a spot of color. Everywhere you look the colorful annuals are begging for a place in the landscape. It is hard to resist them until I remember last week's weather and all the black leaves it left behind. In the meantime, I can look at the MG greenhouse full of blooms. You need to come see; come early for the best choice.

As of the March 22, we have twenty-six new Master Gardner Interns. They are very enthusiastic and as busy as our pollinator friends. Their work in the greenhouse is much appreciated. They are preparing to man the phone lines at the horticulture inquiry desk beginning next week. When you are by the Extension Office, please

congratulate them and offer your support and assistance. Thanks also go to Judy Schaefer and the Education Committee for their work with the class of 2005.

We are also beginning a new program. The Junior Master Gardeners is a nation wide program under the umbrella of the Extension Service at all Land Grant Universities. In Texas, that is, of course, Texas A&M University. There are two levels: one for children in third through fifth grade and one for sixth through eighth graders. There is a program under construction for high school age students. Many schools are integrating it into their curriculum. On March 31, we will have a training session for those who wish to volunteer to help with the program. The training is free. If you wish to

participate, please contact Fay Drozd before March 28. Contact [fdrozd@omniglobal.net](mailto:fdrozd@omniglobal.net) or call (830) 367-2567. The training will be held at the County Extension Office.

We are grateful to the Native Plant Society for a grant to buy the misting system for the greenhouse. This will complete the greenhouse and allow us to use it for propagation classes for the Master Gardeners as well as other garden groups in the community. The system has been ordered and will soon be operating. We would like to show everyone, so drop by if you are in the neighborhood.

Happy gardening,  
Fay Drozd

### Website of the Month: <http://www.gardendesignmag.com/>

"Garden Design Magazine" has a wonderful information site offering a newsletter, links, forums and GD Live (garden show events around the country). "Showcase" and "Growing" pages feature online selections of articles from the magazine.

By: Betty West

### Market Days Scheduled

We have scheduled eight Market Days in 2005. They are April 9 & 23, May 14 & 28, September 10 & 24, October 8 & 22. There will be shifts from 8:30 - 11 am, 11 am - 1:30 pm, 1:30 - 4 pm. There will be three people on each shift. You must be on the schedule to receive credit for time served. The interns from '04 needing hours to complete certification will be given preference in April. After that the '05 interns will be allowed to sign up. The sign up sheet is in the office.

**Earth Day Garden Party** — Judy McClenaghan is hosting a potluck garden party outside on the river. Bring food and a chair and celebrate Earth Day! April 22, 2005, 6:00 p.m., 2001 Arcadia Loop. RSVP to Judy @ 895-7678.



## Ron's Gardening Tips

To till or not to till, that is the question. It seems to me that the over-all consensus of our master gardener's group is to use the earth-kind, or organic approach. For some reason this seems to mean that tilling or mechanical devices is a no-no.

So let's discuss "back-kind" and "plant-kind" tilling. With all the rain we got last summer, and so far this spring we know that a lot of plants grew poorly with a lot of yellowing of the leaves. This was mainly due to the lack of oxygen. Most tree roots that expose themselves in your yard are due to lack of oxygen. They come to the surface to get a breath of air. After all, why do we need plants? Because they produce oxygen. If the ground is too compacted, there are not enough air pockets, and if over watered, the air pockets fill with water. So we need loose well-drained soil.

To me, tilling is as much gardening as is planting seeds. I have spent as much money on tillers and tractors as I have spent on my

children's education. So far, I have gotten more return on the tillers!

Organic gardeners seem to think that tilling causes a hard pan, disturbs microorganisms in the soil, and causes erosion problems. All of this is true to a point. But if done properly, these are not a problem. The biggest problem I see with tilling is that it brings up weed seeds that have been buried too deep to germinate. But face it, it is easier to pull a weed from loose soil than hard ground, and with proper mulching weeds are not too big of a problem.

When it comes to hardpan that is usually caused by super heavy tractors. They cost about \$250,000 dollars--more than I'm going to spend on my garden.

When it comes to disturbing microorganisms, this is true to a point. The fact is that soil structure and microorganisms will re-stratify in ten to fourteen days. It takes most seeds that long to germinate, much less having their roots get

that deep. Besides, tilling adds organic matter like compost and peat moss. Peat moss has a ph of about 5.0 to 5.5 that will help acidify our alkaline soil. Do not add sand. Sand seems to be a logical additive but after adding a truck load to my garden the ground got harder. Remembering back to one of my chemistry classes, we learned that concrete is made from sand, calcium, and heat. Add sand; what do you have? Concrete. (See mom and dad, I did learn something in school!)

Next, we have erosion problems. This problem can be over come by raised beds, making a berm above your garden area to drain water away, and by proper mulching.

So go ahead and till away and save your back for another day! Remember the best thing for your garden is your shadow.

By Ron Richerson

May  
all  
your  
weeds  
be  
wild  
flowers  
!

## Calendar of Events: (Attendance at events other than Master Gardener Meetings is

optional; events are listed for those wishing to attend other educational offerings)

**March 31 – Jr. Master Gardening Training at Kerr Extension office.**

April 5 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter meets at 2:00 p.m. at R.N.C.

**April 6 – HCMG monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. at Kerr County Extension Ofc. Program will be Bill Lindemann on birds of this area. Note that we're back to our usual Wednesday meeting day.**

April 7 – Riverside Nature Center's lunchtime *Brown Bagger* program will be on "Landscape Math: How to plan the materials needed for a garden or a bed." Bring a sack lunch and learn something new. Noon – 1:00 p.m. Fee is \$5 for non-members; \$3 for R.N.C. members.

**April 9 – HCMG will have a booth at Market Days on the grounds of the Kerr County Courthouse from 9:00 – 4:00.**

April 19 – Kerr Cactus and Succulent Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at Butt-Holdsworth Library, Kerrville.

**April 20 – Deadline for HCMG newsletter articles (send to Martha at [hnews@ktc.com](mailto:hnews@ktc.com)).**

**April 22 – Earth Day Garden Party – 6:00 p.m. Judy McClenaghan –RSVP – 895-7678**

**April 23 – HCMG will have a booth at Market Days on the grounds of the Kerr County Courthouse from 9:00 – 4:00.**

April 26 – Gardeners of Kerrville meet at R.N.C. at 2:00 p.m. **John Osborn, MG**, will present a program on ornamental grasses.

**April 27 – HCMG Executive Board meets at 1:00 p.m. at the Ext. Ofc.**

May 3 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, meets at R.N.C. at 2:00 p.m.

**May 4 – HCMG monthly meeting at the Extension Office at 1:00 p.m. Melinda Kneese of Oma's Haus & Garten in Fbg. will speak to us about composting.**



## Kudos:

**Naoma Peacock, Georgia Roth and David Hughes**, our latest Interns to have completed their volunteer hours and become "certified" Master Gardeners.

**Our Education Committee ...Judy Schaefer, Eileen Haden, Ida Luckey, Mary Allen Meriwether, Tony Pacini, Naoma Peacock, Sally Ritch and Debbie Russell** for presenting so many interesting and informative classes this year.

**Carol Johnson** (class of '05) for assuming the responsibility of maintaining our database. She's been hard at work and we'll be ready for the upcoming gardening questions.

**Christine Millar** who's still hard at work on the upcoming gardening publication. Can't wait to turn her loose requesting sponsorships from our community to help defray printing costs.

**Tony Pacini and Greenhouse/Market Days committee members.** We have a working greenhouse full of plants ready for sale at Market Days. Members may purchase plants now so check with Tony about the plants currently for sale and prices.

**Carol Seminara** (class of '05). She's our new Assistant Editor for our newsletter. Glad to have that professional touch added to our staff.

**Debbie Russell** for volunteering to chair the education committee for 2006.

Last, but not least ... the **Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter**, for donating the funds for our new misting system in the MG greenhouse. **Janey Crum**, MG and member of NPSOT, worked on our behalf to acquire these funds. Be sure to thank any members of the NPSOT you know personally for their club's donation and let them know we appreciate their generosity.

By: Betty West

## Volunteer Hours - Record Keeping

Master Gardeners should have turned in their first quarterly timesheets at the end of March. In other words ... **Master Gardeners forms are due now** regardless of whether the page is full or not. Master Gardeners claim mileage but it's limited to a maximum of one hour per round trip. Master Gardeners – report your "**Contacts**" to me via e-mail at [lla@omniglobal.net](mailto:lla@omniglobal.net) by the fourth of the following month after your actual contact. In other words ... if you speak to a group on June 18, you would report to me how many were in the audience by July 4. If your neighbor asks you a gardening question on May 24, then you would notify me of that contact by June 4. When you e-mail me with your contacts, be sure I acknowledge receipt by return e-mail. Otherwise, "that great computer in the sky" may have eaten it. Master Gardeners ... not only are you required to pay your dues but you must complete your 12 volunteer hours and 6 CEUs each year in order to be eligible for recertification and to receive your current year's membership card.

**Interns turn in their volunteer hours at the end of each month.** There are two types of forms ... one for the Interns and one for the MGs, along with instructions on how to fill them out properly. Place your completed monthly timesheets in my basket/tray in the MG office. You keep the instructions sheet for your file. 2004 Interns have until the end of May to complete their fifty volunteer hours in order to become "certified" Master Gardeners. 2005 Interns should complete their fifty volunteer hours by the end of March, 2006.

By: Tommie Airhart, Chair

## Treasurer's Report

Some of our Certified Master Gardeners haven't paid their dues for 2005. March 31, 2005, is the deadline for paying these dues so that I can send them off for State registration. Please check your records to verify you've paid. Otherwise, your name will be dropped from our membership roster. Don't want that to happen.

By: Barbara Robbins, Treasurer

## Nativescapes Garden Tour

The Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter, will host "on-site" tours of five residential gardens in and around Fredericksburg. Tickets are \$7.00. Children 17 and under are free. Be sure to save Saturday, May 21, 2005, for this marvelous tour! More information next month.

### Hill Country Master Gardener Association 2005 Executive Committee

Fay Drozd - President  
Tony Pacini - Vice President  
Diane Whitney - Secretary  
Barbara Robbins - Treasurer  
Kristi Gebauer - Ex-officio Advisor  
Roy Walston - C. E. O. Advisor

### Of Leaf & Limb Newsletter Committee

Editor - Martha Stevens  
Assistant Editor - Carol Seminara  
Contributors – Ron Richerson,  
Georgia Roth, Betty West, Jean  
Anderson

#### **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](mailto:hnews@kctc.com). Indicate "Editor HCMG Newsletter" in the subject line.

## Horticultural Inquiry Committee

We paid attention ... last month's speaker said in some instances a job could be shared. Sounded good to us. I'm **Pam Bresler**, the new chair of this committee. I'll act as liaison with other committees and our Executive Board. In addition, I'll provide training for our new students before they have phone desk duty. We will cover the reference materials in the MG filing cabinet, the database, as well as Internet resources.

**Carol Johnson**, class of '05, is in charge of updating the database so we'll be kept current with the most frequently asked questions. This information is invaluable. A lot of time and effort has gone into setting up this system and making it user friendly. It will make your life so much easier when trying to find answers to questions.

**Betty West** will maintain the Phone Desk Calendar. Once you've signed up for your work dates, she'll prepare a calendar, which will be posted in the MG office. She'll also send you an e-mail confirming your chosen dates. Be sure to initial the calendar beside your name when you arrive for phone desk duty. This verifies that you worked your shift.

By: Pam Bresler, Chair

## Discover Garden at Hunt School

I'm delighted you all enjoyed Marilyn Butcher's presentation; she is a delightful speaker and her organizational skills help keep the rest of us in line.

The fourth and fifth graders have been divided into five teams, each with six or seven "garden ladies". On March 17, Marilyn and Virginia Sams will give the children information on lasagna gardening, the history of the project, and basic gardening knowledge and etiquette.

On March 22, we will all work at preparing the beds for planting. This includes not only weeding, adding nutrients as needed and generally cleaning up, but also having each child develop their own garden plan on grid paper.

By March 29, all should be ready for "Planting Day." Each child will select the seeds or plants necessary to complete his or her garden, and the growing season will begin for plants, children and mentors.

By Georgia Roth

## Organic Products

After listening to Malcolm Beck and being a reuse/recycle advocate, I decided to do some research on the Garden-Ville products. Making the trip to San Antonio for a load of SAWS Compost or "Alamo-Gro," I checked with the people there to see if there was a local representative in the Kerrville area. Lo and behold there is: Rick Martin of Martin Landscaping. He has the bulk Alamo-Gro. His address is 2927 Memorial Blvd and phone number is 830-275-0771.

Other Garden-Ville products are carried at The Plant House located on Schreiner Street. Their products are in bags that are much easier to carry. As of March 14, they had the following products: Lawn and Garden Soil, Potting Soil, Rose Soil, Alamo-Gro, 20% Vinegar, Soil Conditioner, Sea Tea, Sick Tree Treatment and Potassium Carbonate.

Gibson's carries Garden-Ville products as well and theirs are also in bags. As of March 14, they had on hand Container Mix, Native Mulch, Alamo-Gro, Rocket Fuel, Texas Greensand, Potassium Bicarbonate, 20% Vinegar, Orange Oil and Garrett Juice.

I can vouch for the Alamo-Gro being as Mr. Beck stated. It is odorless. When we picked up the cubic yard in San Antonio there was steam coming from the pile. There were very few clumps. In the short time that it has been on the ground it seems to be greening up the grass and plants. So far we have put down four (4) cubic yards and have six (6) to go. As I told my husband, we are up to our elbows in ....SAWS.

By Jean Anderson

## **Committees**

### **Education:**

Judy Schaefer, Chair

### **Greenhouse/Market**

### **Days:**

Tony Pacini, Chair

### **Horticultural Inquiry:**

Pam Bresler-chair

Carol Johnson, Betty West

### **Newsletter:**

Martha Stevens-editor

Carol Seminara-

assistant editor

Contributors: Ron

Richerson, Georgia

Roth, Betty West, Jean

Anderson

### **Nominating:**

Tommie Airhart-chair

Otis Fox, Betty West

### **Program:**

Eileen Haden-Chair

### **Volunteer**

### **Hours/Record**

### **Keeping:**

Tommie Airhart, Chair

### **Mentoring:**

Naoma Peacock, Chair

### **H/C Garden Book**

### **Publication:**

Christine Millar, Chair

## **Minutes of March meeting**

March 3, 2005

The monthly meeting was called to order by President Fay Drozd at 3:20 p.m. on Thursday, March 3, 2005. The meeting was held in conjunction with the 2005 Master Gardener Intern class. Darlene Locker, extension agent from Brownwood gave a program on volunteering and working with people. Following the program, the following business was conducted:

1. The members present are listed on Exhibit "A" attached hereto.
2. Secretary's Report. The minutes of the February meeting were printed in the monthly newsletter. If there are any additions or corrections, please email or telephone Secretary Diane Whitney or President Fay Drozd. The members present made no additions or corrections.
3. Treasurer's Report. Barbara Robbins provided a written report to the members and it is attached hereto as Exhibit "B". Dues: Annual dues of \$18.00 are now due. Barbara requested that all members pay their dues as soon as possible. The memberships dues will be remitted to the state office in March.
4. Congratulations were extended to Sally Rich, our 2004 intern who recently completed all volunteer hours and became a Certified Master Gardener.
5. President's Report on old business. Discussions with Roy Walston resulted in the determination that the organization should be restructured to provide more continuity to the succeeding boards and committees. Therefore, it was proposed that a new officer position, that of president-elect, be created. The duties of the president-elect would be to attend all executive board meetings, become familiar with all committees and projects and assume the duties of president the following year. This change would require a change in the By-Laws to be approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members. The proposed change in By-Laws was published in the February newsletter with the vote to be taken at the March meeting. All Master Gardeners in good standing, those who had completed their volunteer hours for 2004 and had paid their dues for 2005, are allowed to vote. A ballot was provided at the meeting. Voting was by signed ballot and the president collected ballots. A copy of the ballot is attached hereto as Exhibit "C". If the members approve the change in the By-Laws, a nominating committee will be formed to choose a slate of president-elect candidates to be presented at the April meeting. There were no questions or comments from the members present.

There was no other business conducted and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diane S. Whitney, Secretary