



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

November, 2005
Volume 3, Issue 11

Meeting
Wednesday,
November 2, 2005
1:00 p.m.
at the extension office.

John Osborn will
Speak on
Ornamental Grasses.

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President's Message:

I apologize for the change in plans for the November program. The propagation class has to be postponed (again) because of bad timing. According to the by-laws, November is election month. There has to be 25% of the membership present and voting. Those who indicated an interest in the class did not make up 25% of the qualified members. We felt that, without a regular program, the attendance would fall short. Therefore, there will be a speaker as usual for the monthly program. The propagation class will be held on Saturday, November 5. I apologize for any inconvenience.

Kudos are certainly due to the nominating committee of Otis Fox, Tommie Airhart, and Anne Brown, who have presented an excellent slate of officers for

your consideration for 2006. They are Harold Pieratt, Vice President, Sharon Johnson, Secretary, and Carol Johnson, Treasurer. Anne Brown, President-elect will assume the office of president. If there are nominations from the membership, they may be presented at the meeting.

Mark your calendars for December 2, 2005. That is the date for the Christmas party and the installation of officers. This year the party will be held at the Ag Barn. The party committee is working on details and will give us more information later.

A big, big thank you to all those who volunteered to help at the Extension booth at the Kerr County Fair. There was an exhibit to make the public aware of all the groups under the Extension umbrella. The

Master Gardeners tent was set up and information available.

This month there is only one new Master Gardener to be certified. Judy Russell received her certificate last month after the newsletter was published. We would like to formally recognize her. Welcome, Judy.

Plans for the 2007 State Conference are moving along. Most of the committees are organizing and working. There is still a need for volunteers. We appreciate all those who have come forward, but we will need everyone's help. Contact Anne Brown to find out how you can help.

Until next time,
Fay Drozd

Kudos:

Judy Russell, our latest Intern to complete her volunteer hours and become a "certified" Master Gardener.

Anne Brown for handling logistics and staffing; **Tommie Airhart & Tony Pacini** for setting up our booth; and **Cheri Bolden, Carol Johnson, Sharon Johnson, Phyllis Knight, Natalie Morgan, Howard Platte, Sally Ritch, Judy Russell, Judy Simmons and Randy Simmons** for working in our booth at the Kerr County Fair.

Jean Anderson, Fay Drozd, Sandy Martin, Barbara Robbins and Beverly Weidenfeller for attending a conference in Uvalde educating them about working with children in an after-school program. We will be starting a Junior Master Gardener Program for the Salvation Army after school group.

All the HCMG members who worked in the greenhouse and at Market Days this year. Because of your hard work, we have a nice little nest egg. Thank you!

Web Site of the Month

Insect Image Gallery – <http://insects.tamu.edu/imagegallery/> - View special insect image collections or search out database of agricultural pest images. by Fay Drozd



California Dreamin' No More

by Carol Seminara

This September 15 marked the end of my first year as a Hill Country resident. That's the anniversary of the day the moving van dropped off 504 items (including too many boxes of books and dishes) to our new home in Fredericksburg. In making the move, I knew we were trading palm trees for pecan trees and that gardening would be different, in part because of the "seasons," which are infinitely more subtle in SoCal. But after 20 years of living in LaLa Land, even a native Texan such as myself, can forget just how challenging gardening in Texas can be.

Take our chimerical climate.

I've often quoted that old saw about if you don't like Texas weather, stick around for a couple of days and it'll change. But I forgot that the saying is as true as it is trite.

I remember hearing a weather forecast last fall that mentioned the possibility of a freeze. I remember, at the time, noting that it had been years since I'd heard such a prediction. And that was that. I did not rush out and cover my newly planted ground cover or deeply mulch my young color-spot annuals nor drag the Boston ferns inside. I had, quite simply, forgotten what temps below 32 degrees Fahrenheit do to tender vegetation. The next morning, I was dismayed and disheartened to see \$135 of Wild Seed Farm's finest looking for the world like frost-dusted mounds of cooked spinach.

Fortunately, I'm a relatively fast learner. I didn't make the same mistake again. Instead, I signed up for training as a Master Gardener

and soon I was making brand new mistakes to go along with the several I inherited – such as that horticultural punch line: red-tip photinia.

We live on Main Street and, to baffle traffic noise, the previous owners installed a hedge -- a 10-foot tall, 35-foot wide hedge -- of red-tip photinia. In their defense, photinia was once the darling of landscapers because of its quick, upright growth, evergreen foliage, showy white flowers and brilliant red new foliage in the spring. But, red-tip photinia is highly susceptible to a laundry list of ailments, including the fungal pathogen *Entomosporium* that causes leaf spots and, ultimately, defoliation. Not to mention the fact that, once the plant is compromised, it becomes susceptible to a party-pack of other ailments including iron chlorosis, sensitivity to cold injury, other diseases and insects.

Thanks in a large part to my training at the Kerr Extension Office, I've been able to keep the hedge somewhat presentable and relatively disease-free until Joe and I have the inspiration, energy and courage to replace it. We're still debating -- hedge or wall? In the meantime, I keep a 4-inch layer of cedar mulch under the plants to cover the fallen leaves and make occasional applications of iron chelates. I also prune and discard (not compost) any diseased leaves and branches.

Of course, everyone has already heard my whine about the blight that took my thriving tomato crop in mid July, and I've probably killed my weight in annuals trying to fluff up the yard without having a fully-

realized landscape plan.

On the plus side, however, I did a reasonably good job of pruning back our existing shrub *Althaea* (a.k.a. Rose of Sharon), which is a member of the hibiscus family as Joe correctly observed, and it rewarded me with blooms throughout the long, hot summer. The two crape myrtles rewarded us with a shower of pink blossoms, as well. My volunteer sunflowers (from sprouted bird seed) transplanted successfully and grew to 8-foot stalks with blooms that were hugely popular with the local bird population. Too, the single Bat-faced *Cuphea* (*Cuphea llavea*) plant I placed in my sunny, side bed is a sprawling mass of purple and fuchsia colored blooms to this day. And I'm still harvesting fresh basil and jalapeno peppers.

I consider the stripped stalks of our Passion Vine (*Passifloraceae*) one of the successes since it's the larval plant of the *Agraulis vanillae*, the gulf fritillary butterfly and we've seen dozens of pupae.

In a fit of overconfidence, I planted seven late tomato plants last month, in a different bed than the last crop. This morning I saw three small buds. I've got my fingers crossed in hopes of harvesting a few ripe tomatoes before it gets cold. Oh, and I've got the local radar bookmarked on the computer and about 6 inches of mulch around each plant just in case there's a change in the weather.

[
All the
flowers
of
tomorrow
are
in the
seeds
of
today
]

Hunt School Discovery Garden Update

The Discovery Garden continues its work with the Hunt School fourth and fifth graders thanks, in a large part, to volunteers from our Hill Country Master Gardeners who help monitor the weekly outside classroom activities.

During the week, the students study the science end of the Junior Master Gardeners curriculum, with classroom instruction that includes a list of what they have to accomplish. They look forward to each Tuesday as the day when they can apply what they're learning in the hands-on class outside.

Recently, our past president Fay gave a class on one of our geographical plants, cotton, which will be planted later in the spring. Fay explained all about cotton -- its importance as a crop, how it is picked, cleaned and then spun into material -- to the interested students.

Another speaker, Mr. Stokes, the "worm man," not only gave us earthworms for our garden but also explained why we need them. He also discussed complete composting and its importance to soil health.

If it weren't for the HCMG ladies working in the heat each week, there would be fewer hands helping promote this garden and the growing minds it inspires.

by: Janey Crum



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

November 1 – 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. Jim Stanley will present a program on native grasses.

November 1 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter, meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Cibolo Nature Center, Hwy 46 east of Boerne. Eric Lautzenheiser, City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department, will discuss how our natural parks are managed and what they offer to visitors.

November 2 – 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.

November 2 - HCMG monthly meeting at the Kerr County Extension Office at 1:00 p.m. Don't forget ... we vote for our new 2006 officers at this month's meeting! We will also have a program. Optional dutch-treat lunch at Mamacita's restaurant at 11:20 a.m.

November 3 – Riverside Nature Center's Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Series (12 noon – 1:00 p. m..) Topic will be Archeology: Reading the Hills of the Hill Country. Bring a sandwich; drinks and dessert will be provided. Admission is free for RNC members and \$3 for non-members.

November 9 – Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m., Central Texas Electric Co-Op Building, 386 Friendship Lane, Fredericksburg. Jan Fulkerson, Texas Sate Forester, will present a program on being Fire-wise Around your Property.

November 12 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Bandera Chapter, will meet at 2:00 p.m. at the Medina Community Library meeting room, in Bandera. Mike McBride will speak about options and ideas on rainwater collection.

November 15 – Kerr Cactus and Succulent Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at Butt-Holdsworth Library, Kerrville.

November 19 – Invasives Public Awareness Day at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin. Expert presentations on invasive plants along with exhibits of Central Texas invasive plant species. See www.wildflower.org <http://www.wildflower.org/> for more information.

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

November 29 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter, meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg. 312 W. San Antonio St., Fredericksburg.

Committees

Education:

Greenhouse/Market Days:

Tony Pacini,
Chair

Horticultural Inquiry:

Pam Bresler-
chair

Carol Johnson,
Betty West,
Judy Simmons

Newsletter:

Martha Stevens-
editor

Carol Seminara-
assistant editor

Contributors:

Betty West,
Pam Bresler,
Janey Crum,
Peggy Benson
Fay Drozd

Liz Althaus
Judy Simmons

Nominating:

Tommie Airhart-
chair

Otis Fox,

Program:

Eileen Haden-
Chair

Volunteer

Hours/Record Keeping:

Tommie Airhart,
Chair

Mentoring:

H/C Garden

Book

Publication:

Christine Millar,
Chair

Education Committee

WANTED: A Few Good Men and Women. In the spirit of the Marines, I am looking for those among our ranks who are willing to serve...as mentors for the new HCMG class of '06! Although it doesn't require a lot of time or energy, that personal one-on-one contact, especially at the beginning of the classes, can make a tremendous difference down the road. If you want a great opportunity to get to know and to have a positive impact on the upcoming class, please contact me via e-mail at: rsimmons@cebridge.net, or by phone at: (830) 367-5454
by: Judy Simmons

Horticultural Inquiry Committee

Thanks to all the Master Gardeners who have signed up to answer phone inquiries. We are pleased you continue to fill up blank spots in our blue binder. This is a job that gets easier the more you do it. Remember if you have any slack time, you can read the Inquiry Notebooks from 2002-2005 and see the kinds of questions that we've been answering over the past four years. You can also browse the database, as well as the bookmarks on the computer. There's a world of information out there in cyberspace!

by Pam Bresler

Phone Desk Calendar Report

We've got many of the phone desk duty days filled, but five days remain open in November. If any of you can spare us a few hours, we need a volunteer for 11/02, 11/04, 11/21/ 11/23 and 11/28. If you can take any of these dates, please let me know and/or sign up in the infamous blue binder. My e-mail address is dwest@omniglobal.net.

by: Betty West, Phone Desk Calendar

Tour Committee

The tour committee needs one more member to help with its mission—to arrange interesting and educational tours/trips for those attending the Master Gardener Convention. Liz Althaus is the chair of the committee and although not necessary, she would prefer the person who volunteers be from Kerr County. It is important to have individuals from all counties in which our members reside. The volunteer needs to be someone who is knowledgeable of possible opportunities in their county.

Ms. Althaus would like input from all members about possible tours. At the present time she and her committee are compiling a list of possible sites to visit. Six to eight tours different tours will be available to attendees. Some tours will have one destination; others will have two or more. It will depend on much time is needed to visit a site. If you are able to volunteer or want to add a possible site to visit please call Liz at 830-997-7954 or e-mail her at Lizba@kctc.com.

by Liz Althaus

Fall Planting at the Good Samaritan Center

I hope the fall weather has you energized to work at the Good Samaritan Center for a couple of hours next week. We have quite a few things that need doing -- most of it light work -- so I am scheduling both Tuesday, 10/25, and Thursday, 10/27, as work days. Since the weather should be cooler, we've scheduled work from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., but I will be on site earlier gathering plants and getting set up. If you would like to come at an earlier time, please let me know; I could use the help then, too. Of course, I do not expect anyone else to commit to both mornings, but I wanted to plan times that would be convenient for volunteers and sufficient to complete the work.

The things on our to-do list include:

- Pull weeds on the east side of the building where mulch and plants were removed in June in anticipation of completing the rental space.
- Replant that same area. (The plants have been in a holding area and need to be replaced.)
- Design a bed in the back, place metal edging around the new bed and prepare the area for planting. The grass has been killed and it is ready for working
- Install a handmade bird house and a handmade bird feeder. Please note, we need two 6-inch diameter cedar posts between 5 and 6 feet long if you have them to donate.
- Install a few plants in the fountain area.
- Cover a few drip lines with mulch in areas our resident armadillo has dug
- In addition, some of the plants we will be installing are from a donated source and need to be picked up and delivered to the Center. Please let me know if anyone can help with that.

Those of you who haven't been able to volunteer recently and haven't seen the landscaping results of your work last year should come by just to see how beautiful things are at the Center. Please let me know whether you can help so I will have all the necessary equipment available. Also, please bring your own hand tools. Sure hope to see you Tuesday or Thursday morning. Don't forget, the Good Samaritan Center is an approved HCMG project and earns volunteer credit hours.

by Peggy Benson

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting October 04, 2005

President Fay Drozd called the monthly meeting to order at 1:40 p.m. on Wednesday, October 4, 2005, at the county extension office. The meeting was held after the educational program. Nancy Davila from the Garden Shed spoke about growing herbs. President Fay Drozd announced that Roy Walston's father died during the previous week. Flowers were sent on behalf of the Hill Country Master Gardener Association. A collection for the flowers was made at the meeting. The Master Gardeners extend our sympathy to Roy and his family during this time.

1. Secretary's Report. The minutes of the September meeting were published in the September Newsletter. There were no additions or corrections from the members present and were approved and stand as presented.
 2. Treasurer's Report. Barbara Robbins presented the treasurer's report. The organization is solvent and has no outstanding bills. The original report is on file in the records of the Hill Country Master Gardener Association. The Hill Country Master Gardener Association 2006 Garden Planners are still available for purchase. If interested in purchasing a copy, call the extension office or contact Fay Drozd or Barbara Robbins.
 3. Vice President and Greenhouse Committee Chair Report. Tony Pacini had nothing to report regarding the greenhouse. Asked which plants were available for sale, Tony replied that we were selling the usual plants, including Mexican Bush Sage, Lantana and Rosemary. Members were reminded that those who work at the plant sales should be knowledgeable of plants available for sale. It was also reported that there should be a new floor in the pavilion before winter.
- Other Business:
4. Horticultural Desk. Pam Bresler reported that there were fourteen inquiries last month.
 5. Newsletter. Martha Stevens stated that the newsletter would be posted on the state Master Gardener web site and a hard copy available was available here in the Master Gardener office. Martha reported that she was having difficulties emailing the newsletters to members because of difficulties with KTC.
 6. Anne Brown, President Elect, is in charge of finding volunteers for committees for the upcoming State Advanced Master Gardener Training Program in 2007. She reported that we still need volunteers for the 2007 program. A list of Chairs will be included in the newsletter. Please call or email Anne if you can help. Chairpersons are still needed for the Transportation, Tours and Meeting Facilities committees. The YO is the host hotel because there are enough hotel rooms and meeting spaces available in the near vicinity to accommodate the estimated 600 attendees.
 7. Carol Biggs, public relations, reported that the theme and logo of the 2007 program have been narrowed down to 4 choices: (1) Boots, Scoots and Gardening, (2) Kick it Up Another Notch, (3) Boots and Blossoms, (4) Boots are Made for Gardening. No logo will be designed until a theme name is selected. Carol Seminara's husband will design a logo.
 8. Liz Althaus volunteered to chair the Tour Committee. If any member has a suggestion for a tour, contact Liz.
 9. Dusty Gilliam would like to know if any member has heard a (or of a) great speaker lately. We need speakers for presenters and for the banquets.

10. Fay reported that, finally, there is an article in the newspaper about the 2006 Master Gardener class. Fay has flyers available for grocery stores, and laundromats and other appropriate public places. She also has Master Gardener applications available. John Coleman agreed to mention the 2006 class in his column. We have received six applications for the 2006 class to date. Planning for the 2006 class is in progress and there will be a few changes from last year. Roy Walston's presentation will kick-off the course and Doug Welsch's speech will end the class. The students will come in early and pick up their manuals. There are three or four field trips planned. Most of the usual suspects from Uvalde will give their presentations.

11. The following newly certified Master Gardeners were presented with their Certificates, Membership Cards, membership badges and refunds: Dorothy Powell, Judy Russell. The group congratulated Dorothy on her 50th Wedding Anniversary. There are only 3 more 2005 interns left who are working on Master Gardener certificates. Congratulations to all.
 12. The Junior Master Gardener program is underway at the Salvation Army. Laurinda Boyd, and four Master Gardeners went to Uvalde to learn how to work with children. They will be volunteering at the Salvation Army helping to make flower/vegetable beds. If anyone wants to help, call Fay.
 13. The Nominating Committee has selected candidates for the 2006 officers. Voting will be held at the November meeting and installation of officers at the December meeting. If there are any other nominations from members, please email Tommie Airhart. The proposed slate of officers is as follows: President: Anne Brown, Vice President: Harold Pieratt, Secretary: Sharon Johnson, Treasurer: Carol Johnson
 14. Fay's propagation class will be held at the November meeting, postponed from July. Sign up sheets are at the back tables. Contact Fay if you are interested in attending so she can have enough materials for the group.
 15. Anne Brown announced that we need a knowledgeable person for our Master Gardener organization to serve as Public Relations Coordinator. The job would consist of putting notices in the paper about Master Gardener meetings and projects and getting our name out in the community. Please contact her if you are interested or know anyone who would be.
 16. Fay Drozd and John Osborn held their classes for the Community Education Center. There were 11 students scheduled and 18 people showed up for class. Tony and Jean helped scrounge up extra pots and dirt for the extra people.
 17. Pam Bresslar needs phone duty volunteers to sign up through next March, when the new batch of Interns will be ready to go. Please contact Pam.
 18. Laurinda Boyd addressed the group regarding the up coming Kerr County Fair. She has a large area available and has invited the Farm Bureau, Ag in the Classroom group to have a display. There will be a roping dummy for children, and displays from A&M, Hospice and the Master Gardeners. The Master Gardeners will use their display as a publication relations recruitment tool, since there will be a large attendance at the fair. Set up day is Thursday, October 27, at 9:00. Home Depot and Lowe's will be contacted for decorative fencing. There is table skirting and other equipment available. We can have plant specimens and native plant displays. Laurinda wants to have an attractive booth for fair-goers. We need volunteers for set-up and take down of the booth and booth sitting for the following days: October 27, 28 & 29. There will be Country-Western Dance Saturday night after 8 or 9:00 o'clock. Send Fay an email if you want to design and set up the MG booth.
- There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted, Diane S. Whitney

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

Fay Drozd – President
Anne Brown – President Elect
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

Editor - Martha Stevens
Assistant Editor - Carol Seminara
Contributors – Fay Drozd, Betty West, Pam Bresler, Janey Crum, Peggy Benson, Judy Simmons

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.