



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

February, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 2

Wednesday,
February 1,
1:00 p.m.

Extension Office

Speaker:
President Anne Brown
on Oak Wilt

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President's Message:

Hi everyone.

The new class is off and running. We have fifteen students who have varied backgrounds and interests, and are eager to learn. They had their orientation on the 17, and began classes on the 24. We wish them well during their training, and look forward to their completion of their intern period and becoming Certified Master Gardeners.

We have received notice from Doug Welsh, the horticulturist from A&M who is the coordinator for the Texas Master Gardener program, about the for now final answer on the criminal history checks. The current position is that only MGs who work with youth have to have the checking done. Therefore, those of you who have sent in your checks will have them returned along with the form. We will be identifying those who do need the criminal history check and will be getting with you. However, all MGs will have to sign a form indicating that they do not work with youths. I will

write that form and bring it to the February meeting so we can put this particular issue behind us.

A lot of you turned in your dues at the last meeting, and big thanks for so doing. However, we have to pay dues to the state by March 1, so I would appreciate all of you that have not paid them to please do so quickly. Thanks for your help in this matter. We had the first meeting of the bylaws committee in January. Tommie Airhart chairs the committee and members are Anna Osborn, John Osborn, Otis Fox, Howard Platte, Fay Drozd and myself. The intention is to review the current bylaws, review the State ones, and create a document, which can be a guide for the organization for the coming years. We will keep you posted on the progress.

I have invited Cass Keen, the Executive Director of Riverside Nature Center, to our February meeting. She has obtained a grant to do some work with Habitat for Humanity and needs some plant coaches. She will explain the entire

program to you and perhaps some of you will want to volunteer to help.

Any of you who are interested in the Specialist programs should go to the state website (texasmastergardeners.com), look under calendar of events, and see what ones are being offered this spring and summer. Currently there are specialists programs available are in Junior Master Gardener, Plant Propagation, Etymology, Oak Wilt, and the new one, Rainwater Harvesting. As you know, the programs are open to Certified Master Gardeners, must be approved by Roy Walston, are usually 1 and 1/2 days long, require an overnight stay somewhere, and have a registration fee. After the training, the Specialist is required to do an extra 12 hours of volunteer work in their specialty

Most of you know that John Coleman suffered a serious accident on his ranch. Please keep John and his family in your thoughts and prayers as he continues his recovery.

by Anne Brown

KUDOS TO ...

Ron Richerson for donating Bradford pear trees to HCMG and **Tony Pacini** for digging them up.

The entire Education Committee for organizing and preparing our new students, and especially to **Eileen Haden** who filled in as interim Chair until one was appointed.

Roy Walston for being such a supportive Extension Agent. No matter what we need, he is available and willing to lend a hand.

Jamie McClintock for having the patience of a saint. No matter how stressed, she is always there with a smile and she knows where everything is located.



Herbs for Health, Part One

by Carol Seminara

Recently I was contacted by a local group to present a short program on herbs. Huzzah, I thought, any time I can talk about culinary herbs in the landscape is a good day.

Then I learned that this group was interested in medicinal herbs specifically for the treatment of lung disorders. This is not my specialty, but since our HCMG vice president had recommended me for the task, I accepted the challenge and went to work on my research.

An herb is a plant grown for its culinary, medicinal or, in some cases, spiritual value. The green leafy part of the plant is typically used. Generally, culinary herbs are non-woody plants, while a medicinal herb may be a shrub or other woody plant. By contrast, spices are seeds, berries, bark, root, or other parts of the plant, including leaves in some cases (for example, bay leaves are considered a spice rather than an herb). Any of these parts, as well as any edible fruits or vegetables, may be considered "herbs" in medicinal or spiritual use. Additionally culinary herbs and spices are distinguished from vegetables or fruits in that they are used in small amounts to provide flavor rather than sustenance.

Both "hurb" and "urb" are correct pronunciations and merely identify the speaker as being the product of either the British or American school system, respectively, although many New Englanders still say "hurb."

Ancient Greek and Roman poetry and myths are some of the earliest sources of herb lore and use. Certain herbs, such as rue, were thought to be gifts from the gods to help cure sickness and wounds. Other herbs were associated with the gods' messy interpersonal relationships. Menthe was a young nymph who caught the underworld god Pluto's eye. His wife was jealous and turned poor Menthe into a plant that grows in shade and moisture. Ancient medicine recommended using mint leaves to prevent indigestion, heal skin diseases, cure mouth and gum ailments, as a stimulate for the appetite, and as a cure for the bite of a mad dog.

Meanwhile in the Orient, Chinese medicine is reputed to have been founded in 2700 B.C. by Shen Nyng, an herbalist and expert in the creation and use of poison. The ancient Chinese chewed cloves to perfume their mouths before speaking to royal dignitaries, and ginger was used as a preservative for meats.

For centuries, India was the center of the herb and spice trade. Turmeric, cardamom and cloves were cultivated in the Indus Valley for more than 1000 years B.C.

The Bible, too, has several references to herbs and their uses. One passage suggests the ancient Pharisees paid their taxes in mint leaves and anise and cumin, and there are references to pungent herbs such as hyssop being used to cleanse the body of disease and the soul of sin.

While searching for a new trade route to India, Christopher Columbus happened on the New World. When he returned to Spain, his ships were loaded with allspice, red peppers and cocoa, gifts from this new land.

Later, European immigrants to the Americas brought their favorites herbs with them: English planted mint and thyme; Germans, Scots and Irish with William Penn planted dill and savory.

I found several relevant Web-sites for medicinal herbs used to treat lung and breathing disorders. Herbs listed below for the specified problems were selected on the basis of having the highest medicinal properties and edibility ratings from Plants for a Future (<<http://www.pfaf.org/>>), a resource center for rare and unusual plants, particularly those which have edible, medicinal or other uses.

Another useful site was Alternative Nature Online Herbal (<<http://altnature.com/>>), which includes medicinal herb plant descriptions, more than 300 herb pictures, as well as many articles on alternative medicine, herbal uses and cultivation.

Anti-asthmatic (treats asthma)

Garlic
Ginkgo biloba
Peach

Decongestant (removes phlegm and mucous, especially from the respiratory system)

Raspberry

Demulcent (soothes, lubricates and softens irritated tissues, especially the mucous membranes)

Licorice
Flax
Persimmon
Hemp

Expectorant (clears phlegm from the chest by inducing coughing)

Garlic
Leek
Shallot
Onion

Antitussive (prevents or relieves coughing)

Persimmon
White mulberry
Marshmallow
Peach

Pectoral (relieves respiratory diseases, a remedy for chest diseases)

Licorice
Wild sarsaparilla
Flax

Of course I issued a very stern common sense warning to my listeners and to anyone considering self-administering medicinal herbs: Before using any herbal remedy or beginning any alternative regimen, consult with your doctor or medical practitioner. Be sure to disclose all medications -- prescription and any over-the-counter drugs, including all vitamin supplements -- you are currently taking.

Just because an herb is "natural" does not mean it is "harmless." Two words best illustrate this caveat: hemlock tea.

[
**Maybe it sounds peculiar
to say
that dirt is clean,
but I think new-plowed
dirt's the cleanest
thing
I know of.**

**Alberta Wilson Constant,
1959**

Invitation to Master Gardener Students

HCMG President Anne Brown is issuing an invitation to our latest class of Master Gardener students to attend our regular monthly meetings. While attendance to meetings is vigorously encouraged for certified MGs, members of the class of 2006 are not required to attend. They are, however, welcome.

We meet the first Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. in the Kerr County Extension Office classroom. Changes in the regular meeting time, when they occur, are listed in the Calendar of Events column in the Of Leaf and Limb newsletter, available on-line at our Web-site: www.hillcountrymastergardeners.org



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

February 1 - 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.

February 1 - HCMG monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office. Anne Brown, our president, will present a program on oak wilt. An Executive Committee meeting will follow the regular monthly meeting.

February 7 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Riverside Nature Center (RNC), 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville.

February 7 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter, meets at 7:00 p.m., Cibolo Nature Center, Hwy 46 east of Boerne.

February 8 - Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Central TX Electric Co-Op Bldg., 386 Friendship Lane, Fredericksburg. Speaker is Melinda Kneese of Oma's Haus; her program is "Improving the Soil with Organics."

February 9 – Riverside Nature Center's lunchtime "Brown Bagger series." presents Plant Propagation by Fay Drozd, HCMG. Bring a sack lunch, Noon – 1:00 p.m at the RNC, 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville. Cost is \$3.

February 11 – Cibolo Nature Center's Second Saturday Nature Walk, 9:30 a.m. Join CNC founder, Carolyn Chipman Evans, on an interpretive walk through the park.

February 11 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Bandera Chapter, meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Medina Community Library meeting room, in Bandera.

February 14 – Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center meet at 7:00 p.m. at the Gillespie County Ag Extension Bldg., 95 Frederick Rd., Fredericksburg. Program is "Everything You Want to Know About Purple Martins" by Louise Chambers, Outreach and Education Director for the Purple Martin Conservation Assoc. For more info, contact Jane Crone at (830) 669-2639.

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

February 21 - Kerr Cactus and Succulent Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.

February 27 – Texas Master Naturalists meet 7:00 p.m. in Kerrville at Riverside Nature Center (RNC), 150 Francisco Lemos St.

February 28 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter, meets 7:00 p.m. in the Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg., 312 W. San Antonio St., Fredericksburg.

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 are 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:

Judy Simmons-Chair

H/C Garden Book

Publication:

Christine Millar, Chair

Horticultural Inquiry Committee

Hope you all enjoyed a wonderful holiday and are ready for spring gardening. We have added a small clerical duty for the phone desk volunteers. When you pick up MG phone messages from Jamie's office, please check to see if we have several copies of the current newsletter on hand in the outer office. If not, please Xerox a few. Anne wants to improve our visibility in the community, and having copies of the newsletter available for walk-in patrons may help recruit new members.

We will revise our Office Training handout and post the revised handout on the file cabinet. Thanks for your help with telephone duty.

by: Pam Bresler, Chair

Get Well Soon, John!

HCMG John Coleman suffered head and neck injuries as a result of a fall at his ranch earlier this winter.

At press time, John's wife Ann reported that he should be transferred to Sid Peterson Hospital in Kerrville sometime soon. She knows John would appreciate hearing from all his Master Gardener pals.

Cards and letters of encouragement can be mailed to John at his home address: 5001 San Antonio Highway, Kerrville, TX 78028.

Speakers Bureau

During last month's executive board meeting, we decided to form a speaker's bureau. Some topics are already on the list. They are: seed propagation, ornamental grasses, propagation, roses, and oak wilt. If you have a speech and expertise on a particular subject and would like to be included on this list, get in touch with Vice President Harold Pieratt at 317 Heritage Hills Dr., Fredericksburg, 78624 or email him at rxl@austin.rr.com. Having a Speakers Bureau will help raise visibility of HCMG and enable us to share our knowledge and specialties.

Project Proposals

If you have come up with a great idea for a new project, write a project proposal and submit it to the executive board. There will be a form for this in the near future.

Needed: A Publicity and Communications Chair

The Hill Country Master Gardeners are looking for a person to chair a committee responsible for publicity. This person and committee will need to take pictures at events, meetings and classes and write articles for the newspapers, magazines, etc. This committee will need to be the contact for us and visit media representatives in person to submit press releases.

HCMG Website of the Month

<http://www.pfaf.org> - Much information about different kinds of plants, edible and medicinal included. It also has gardening hints and links to other sites.

Submitted by Carol Seminara

**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.

HCMG January 4, 2006 Monthly Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Anne Brown at 1:00 PM on January 4, 2006.

1. Announcements.

Newsletter. The newsletter is on the web site now by the 1st of the month. If the first is on a Wednesday the newsletter will be on the site the week before. The web site address is www.hillcountrymastergardeners.org. Extra copies will be available in the Extension Office for visitors.

Education committee. Anne requested that last year's committee members please bring any material they may have back to the MG office.

Upcoming specialist courses. Landscape Design – end of February.
Rainwater Harvesting Specialist Program – end of June

If interested, Anne has additional information. Anne has forms for the Rainwater Harvesting course. Attendance is limited.

Dues. Annual dues are \$18.00 and are due now. Make checks payable to Hill Country Master Gardeners and give them to Anne.

Criminal history checks. There is no definitive decision yet if they are needed by all. Anne will send an e-mail when further information is available.

March meeting. The March meeting has been moved to March 7 and will be a combination meeting and class.

2. Convention Update. Things are moving along The committee is starting to address sponsorships and will mock out a program soon. The 4-H scholarship committee is designing tote bags which will be a unique design. We still need ideas for tours. This year's convention is in College Station. Most Committee chairs will be attending. Anne recommends getting registered soon if interested in going. More information can be found at texasmastergardeners.com. There is a link from the HGMG web site.

3. Introductions. HGMG members and 2006 students introduced themselves. Judy Simmons introduced mentors and their assignees.

4. Note. John Coleman has suffered a fall and is in University Hospital in San Antonio.

The meeting was adjourned and followed by refreshments and a social get-together.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon K Johnson