



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

October, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 10

Wednesday,
October 4th, 2006
1:00 p.m.
Extension Office

Speaker:
Rick Martin of Martin
Landscaping will discuss
Organic Gardening and
Landscaping.

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President's Message:

Hi Everyone!

I am sitting in a campground surrounded by majestic pine trees (Jeffery Pines to be exact) in South Lake Tahoe trying to think up what to say since I have been gone all month and don't exactly know what is going on with HCMG. That being said, I do have a few things of which to remind you.

First of all, thanks to all of you who commented on the bylaws at the last meeting. I got feedback that it was a productive and energetic meeting. I'm sure the resultant changes will enhance the proposed revisions. Don't forget to come to the October meeting so we can finalize the bylaws. If you are unable to come to the meeting, please send or give me a proxy vote if you wish to participate. You can leave or send your proxy to me at the office or at my home address – be sure to get them to me before the meeting so your vote can be counted.

My thanks to Tommie Airhart and all the members of the bylaws committee – Anna Osborn, John Osborn, Howard Platte, Otis Fox, Fay Drozd, and myself for working so hard to make this document a viable one. Also thanks to Carol Seminara and Sharon Johnson for helping out in the production of the document.

The convention planning is coming along great. Thanks to Tommie Airhart for chairing the meeting in my absence. It is my understanding that the YO is now sold out, so it looks as if the convention is going to exceed our expectations. The committee decided that it would be a good idea to go ahead and put the registration form up in November instead of waiting for January. We will accomplish two things – we will start getting some money in to cover expenses, and we will have time to work the bugs out of the registration process without being pressed for time. Also, with two hotels sold out, interest is high, and this is a good time to follow up on that. My thanks to Randy Simmons, Registration Chair, for agreeing to start earlier, and Carol Seminara, and her husband Joe, for designing the registration form. It should go without saying that we would not have been able to produce the form early if two committees hadn't been working very hard. A huge thanks to Liz Althaus and her committee for organizing the tours, and to Dusty Gilliam and her committee to arranging for all of our great speakers. Without the hard work of those two committees we would not be as far along as we are.

Since I do not know anything else about what is going on, I

want to tell you about an experience we had at the beginning of our trip. We left Kerrville early on the 3rd and we started to get rain around Ozona. It rained all the way to Santa Fe. What we saw in West Texas was something I have never seen out there – it was green. I truly did not know that West Texas could get green. And Southern New Mexico, another desert area, was the same. To top that off, in Western New Mexico, we stopped at two national monuments, El Malpais and El Moro, and we saw a sight that, according to the rangers, had not happened in 17, yep 17, years. There were abundant wildflowers everywhere, probably denser than we see in good years in Texas. What a truly unique experience to which we were treated!

I understand that Kerrville has been getting some much needed rain, so I hope to see the beginnings of some green when I return. Please try to get to the meeting on October 4th to vote on the bylaws. See you then.

Anne Brown

HCMG Website of the Month

<http://www.batcon.org> This site has information on bats and their contributions to the natural world.



Don't Forget to Write

By Carol Seminara

Beautiful gardens don't just happen. They evolve over time with knowledge, experience and a modicum of help from Mother Nature.

While there's not a lot we can do about the whims of nature or climate, we can keep track of our newly acquired data and hard-won skills by recording them. The easiest way to make such a record, of course, is in a journal.

This is not some New Age, touchy-feely notion I picked up watching too much day-time TV, although Martha and Oprah are both avowed journal keepers and gardeners.

Keeping a garden record -- whether you call it a garden journal, diary or planner -- is a valuable tool in your horticultural arsenal. It can help increase your gardening success and thereby boost your pleasure as a gardener. By writing it down, you won't have to remember what you planted where and when, what grew and what died. You can map out future plantings with shopping lists, seed catalog inventories and wish lists. You can diagram the layout of future flower or vegetable beds before putting spade to ground. You can play with color or make a seasonal check-list of garden chores. You can make notes on the birds, butterflies, squirrels, toads and other wildlife that visit your garden.

Only you know how much time and detail you want to devote to your garden chronicle. There are many different types of journals and a variety of ways to record your information. Obviously, you should pick the ones that best meet your needs and style. Your journal can be a simple log of what you planted and the results; or it can be an elaborate scrapbook filled with plans, sketches and photos, personal observations, inspirations quotes, seed packets, etc.

However you choose to keep it, there isn't a better source of information on which plants grow in your yard or tips on what to do next year than the ones you record in your garden journal this year.

To get you started, here are some general ideas on ways to record and store your gardening information.

A garden diary is a good way to simply keep a record of activities and

observations in a chronological order. This is a good choice for the "just the facts" gardener who is interested in succinct documentation of pertinent data without a lot of fuss and extraneous details.

For those who want to record a bit more, but still within defined margins, the bound garden journal is a good choice. Unlike the diary, which is rarely formatted, a bound garden journal usually has certain pages designed for specific content, such as "record of purchases," "successful plants," and seasonal "task lists," with spaces for you to fill-in your garden's statistics. Often, bound garden journals have grid pages for sketching and planning purposes, and some have blank spots for pasting in seed packets or photos. Commercially bound diaries and garden journals are available from most booksellers.

On-line journal sites are readily available on the internet, and many services are free. Some Web-based journals provide templates for you to customize and you usually have the choice to publish (i.e., share with the online community) or keep your blog private. You can record all the usual data (as with a diary or bound journal), but you can also upload photos and videos of your garden. How cool is it to have a short video of the wind rustling through your bed of Muley grass?

Of course, if you don't want to create a blog, then you can always use a database program to record your data. I'm particularly fond of FileMaker Pro and have a database of my cookie cutter collection.

But when it comes to my garden journal, I'm a loose-leafer. I keep my garden journal in a three-ring binder; my newest one is made of 100 percent recycled cardboard. I have dividers for different topics and lots of pocket folders for holding all manner of newspaper clippings and magazine articles, plant tags and seed packets, notes and drawings. I have a section devoted to garden plans for drafting beds and plantings. I have a reference section for plant lists, bibliographies, and Extension Office bulletins. In fact, my MG binder was my first Hill Country garden journal.

Garden journaling has a long and illustrious history. As a garden diarist,

you'll find yourself in pretty good company. For example:

George Washington spent 45 years designing and planting the gardens at Mount Vernon, even though he visited his home and farm only 15 times. Despite being an absentee owner, Washington was closely involved in developing his land and wrote detailed instructions for his gardeners, whom he required to write weekly accounts of the work they completed. Washington developed a system of crop rotation that allowed him to make a decent income at a time when other farmers were losing money. Washington's garden journals mention more than 100 ornamental shrubs and trees, more than half of which were American native species. Some of his favorites included the mountain laurel, redbud, dogwood and a Southern magnolia (*Magnolia gradiflora*), which was one of his prized possessions.

In addition to drafting the Declaration of Independence and serving as the third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson was an enthusiastic planter and agricultural expert. His handwritten garden books span 60 years (from 1766 to 1824) detailing the hundreds of varieties of fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs and trees planted at his homes in Shadwell and Monticello. In addition to lists of plants, Jefferson recorded planting locations, when seeds were sown, harvesting dates, notes on weather conditions and other observations, including how tasty was the ripe produce "brought to table." Jefferson was one of the first to raise tomatoes in America and grew at least 330 varieties of vegetables in his 1,000-foot kitchen garden.

Washington and Jefferson's garden books provide not only a fascinating look into the thoughts of these men, but a literary snapshot of the time of their lives. Okay, so your journaling effort may not end up being a national treasure, it can be an historical document of great importance. To you. There's no better way to spend a dreary winter's day, than reviewing those sunny blooms described in your pages.

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Nature does not complete things. She is chaotic. Man
must finish, and he does so by making a garden and
building a wall.

-Robert Lee Frost

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

October 3 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, will meet at Riverside Nature Center (RNC), 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville. Field trip for members only.

October 3 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter, 7:00 p.m., Cibolo Nature Center, 1 City Park Rd., Boerne (off Hwy 46 east of Boerne). Dr. John Abbott will present a program on “Dragonflies & Damselflies Found in Texas Hill Country.”

October 4 – HCMG State Conference Steering Committee Chairs meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Extension Office.

October 4 - HCMG monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office. Program is “Organic Gardening/Landscaping” by Rick Martin of Martin Landscaping. This meeting is extremely important because we’ll vote on the proposed by-laws amendments.

October 8 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Bandera County Chapter, meets at 2:00 p.m., Medina Community Library meeting room, Medina. Lottie Millsaps will discuss “Using Family Characteristics in Learning to Identify Wildflowers.”

October 11– Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Central Texas Electric Co-Op Bldg., 386 Friendship Lane, Fredericksburg. The subject is “Orchids” and will be presented by Jessica Burg.

October 12 – Riverside Nature Center is hosting the final “Brown Bagger” of the year. Bring a sack lunch to the RNC

from noon – 1:00 p.m. and enjoy a program on “Basic Birding: How to Identify Birds” by Jay Keen. Drinks & Dessert provided. Cost is \$3 for non-members and \$1.50 for RNC members.

October 14 – Hill Country Master Naturalists & Riverside Nature Center will have a “native tree & plant sale” at RNC from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. There will be a talk at 9:30 a.m. about “Native Plants for Butterflies” by Sandra Magee and another lecture at 11 a.m. on “Learn Your Hill Country Butterflies” by Thomas Collins.

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

October 19-22 – Native Plant Society of Texas Annual Symposium. Workshops & field trips related to this year’s theme of “Convergence and Diversity: Native Plants of South Central Texas.” San Antonio Marriott Northwest, 3233 NW Loop 410, San Antonio. See www.npsot.org, e-mail symposium@npsot.org, or call 830/997-9272 for additional information.

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

October 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. Lonnie Childs will present “Agaves, Yuccas and Other Alien Species of the Hill Country.”

Committees

Demonstration

Garden: Tony Pacini, Chair

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:

Jean Anderson, Chair

Market Days:

Tony Pacini, Chair

Horticultural Inquiry:

Pam Bresler-chair
Carol Johnson, Betty West,

Judy Simmons

Jr. Master Gardener

Program: Fay Drozd. chair

Newsletter:

Martha Stevens-editor
Carol Seminara-

assistant editor

Contributors: Betty

West, Ida Luckey,

Anne Brown, Jean

Anderson

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

Kudos

Tommie Airhart, Anne Brown, Fay Drozd, Anna Osborn, John Osborn and Howard Platte for serving on the By-Laws Committee. **Carol Seminara and Sharon Johnson** assisted in the presentation of the proposed changes.

Carol Seminara for winning a red ribbon at the Gillespie County Fair for her Prickly Pear Jelly (see Carol's recent article "A Prickly Subject" in the September newsletter.)

Peggy Benson for heading up the recent "Wildscapes: Gardening to Attract Wildlife" conference in Fredericksburg. **Liz Althaus** was in charge of the catered lunches.

Otis Fox and Tommie Airhart for serving on the Nominating Committee. Is Tommie not a "silver-tongue devil?" They already have a slate of officers for 2007.

Tommie Airhart for chairing the September Convention Planning Committee and Harold Pieratt for chairing the regular September meeting while our President was on a much-deserved vacation.

Cheri Bolden, Phyllis Knight, Eleanor Baldwin, John Osborn, Tony Pacini and Jean Anderson for planting in the Demonstration Garden. This was done under the broiling sun, high humidity and wet earth and the garden looks better than the plain brown earth. By spring it will be perfect for the State Convention.

Ron Richerson for the many beautiful plants he donated to the Demo Garden.

Double Kudos

Tony Pacini, Cheri Bolden, Phyllis Knight, Marguerite Belec, and Mildred Coggin who helped clean the greenhouse and start preparation for our next growing season. What a great bunch of people.

Hours and Tracking

Master Gardeners, it is still only 12 Volunteer hours and 6 Continuing Education hours to get you recertified for this year. Turn in those time sheets. I know you are out there helping the community, please just let me know. Congratulations to Jean Anderson and Phyllis Knight for getting their recertification hours this September.

by Ida Luckey, Chair

Greenhouse

A reminder that the October Watering Schedule is posted in the MG Office. We would appreciate more of the membership getting involved in this endeavor. We appreciate ALL who volunteer to keep our Greenhouse and the Demonstration Garden going.

I would like to thank the new members of the Greenhouse Committee for being so generous with their time. Phyllis Knight, Mildred Coggin, Marguerite Belec, Cheri Bolden and Eleanor Baldwin. Thanks guys. Our plants enjoy their time with you.

by Jean Anderson, Chair

Minutes

Minutes for August 2, 2006

Called to order at 1:10 p.m.

Speaker: Art Stokes. Subject: composting

Business meeting:

Treasurer's report: Carol Johnson reported a balance of \$5607.49.

Discussions and announcements:

1. How to handle Master Gardeners from out of state or the area. Doug Welsh said that if they had been inactive more than two years they should retake the whole class. If they had a current certification they could be absorbed into the group. It was suggested that they audit some of the classes to become familiar with local soils, plants, etc.
2. Dorothy Powell has asked for and been granted a leave of absence due to the illness of her husband.
3. Liz Althaus is having surgery today. We wish her the best.
4. Tommie Airhart talked about the bylaw changes presented by the committee and printed in the newsletter. Tommie called attention to the changes. They are printed in red. Copies are available for those who do not have access to a computer. Everyone should read them and bring their comments to the meeting in September or talk to Tommie before the meeting. They will be discussed fully in September and the final draft voted on at the October meeting. If you will not be present at the October meeting please make arrangements to vote by proxy to make your wishes known. Due to the length of the program and there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The committee chairs were asked to remain for a short meeting.

HCMG September 6, 2006 Monthly Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Harold Pieratt at 2:30 p.m. on September 6, 2006 following a presentation on herbs by Beth Patterson, Herb Association of Texas.

Treasurer's Report. Carol Johnson reported deposits of \$1,026.00 and withdrawals of \$1,613.52 leaving a balance of \$5,019.97.

Committee Updates.

Convention. There have been 943 hits on the website. Raffle tickets are still available. The tours have been priced and all speakers are in place.

Education. Debbie Russell reported that 16 applications for the 2007 class are being sent out to interested parties. The application is also on the web site and hard copies are available at the Extension Office. Instructors for the 2007 classes are set up. The deadline for applications is October 15. Classes will be held once a week on Tuesdays. Orientation will be held at the first Master Gardner meeting in January. The first class will be on Tuesday, January 9.

Harold announced new chairpersons for the following committees: Tony Pacini, Demonstration Garden; Jean Anderson, Greenhouse; John Osborn, Market Days; Fay Drozd, Jr Master Gardeners; Judy Simmons, Mentorship.

Bylaws. The bylaws committee with Tommie Airhart as chair facilitated a discussion on the proposed changes to the HGMG bylaws giving all members the opportunity to provide input. As a result of the discussion, some minor changes will be incorporated into the document. A vote to accept the revised bylaws will be taken at the October meeting. Proxies will be available for those not able to attend the October meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m...

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon K Johnson

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 –Betty
West, Anne Brown,
Ida Luckey, 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. Indicate "Editor HCMG Newsletter" in the subject line.