



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

September, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 9

Wednesday,
September 6, 2006
1:00 p.m.

Extension Office

Speaker:

Beth Patterson, Herb Association of Texas, will present "Gifts from the Herb Garden" and discuss the upcoming herb conference in San Antonio.

Highlights:

President's Message	1
Website of the Month	1
A Prickly Subject	2
Calendar	3
Kudos	4
Hours & Tracking	4
Bylaws Committee	4
About Our Members	5
Proposed Bylaws	5

President's Message:

Hi Everyone!

I would like everyone to make a special effort to attend the meeting on September 6. As you know, the Bylaws Committee has presented a draft of the new revised bylaws as published in the August newsletter. A few changes have already been proposed. The September meeting will focus on a discussion of these bylaws so that in October, we all can vote on the final draft. If you want something in or out of the bylaws, this is your opportunity. Once the document is voted on in October, your chance to have input is over until the next revision, which hopefully will not be anytime soon. So, please come and let us know your thoughts.

Changing subjects, at the last meeting of the Executive Committee and Committee Chairs, we discussed the current committee structure and whether it was a good idea to combine committees. After much

consideration, it was decided that the greenhouse and market days committee should be split. The thought was that both were much larger than when they were combined, and it would not be such a burden on the Chair if they were split. Also, we needed to establish a committee for the new demonstration garden, and the Junior Master Gardener program needed to be a standing committee. We also discussed the issue of one person chairing more than one committee and we felt that we were large enough now that we shouldn't do that. The Executive Committee and Chairs felt that the proposed changes were needed, and they unanimously voted for them.

To that end, I would like to announce that the following Chairs were appointed: Jean Anderson will be the new Greenhouse Chair effective September 1. John Osborne will be the Market Days Chair effective January 1, 2007. Toni Pacini will be the Demonstration

Garden Chair effective immediately. Fay Drozd will be the Chair of the Junior Master Gardener program effective immediately. My sincere appreciation to these four people for stepping up and assuming a leadership position in the HCMG.

Anyone interested in working on these committees or being a Chair of a committee should contact me. Remember, the Nominating Committee will be developing a slate of officers in the near future. Anyone interested in being an officer should contact Otis Fox, Chair, and let him know of your interest.

Convention Update: The host hotel, the Inn of the Hills, is sold out already. That's a really great start to our successful convention next spring.

Anne Brown

HCMG Website of the Month

<http://www.whitethornhouse.com/cacti/cacti>. This site has pictures and descriptions of the cacti of the Southwest. It has lots of information collected by Andrew Cooper.



A Prickly Subject

By Carol Seminara

A couple of weeks ago, Joe and I saw a tower of cumulous clouds building in the distance and, hoping to chase down some rain, we jumped in the car and drove toward those emerging thunderheads. Alas, we never did find any measurable precip, but we did happen upon a huge stand of prickly pear cactus in full fruit growing along the county road.

I'd already put up this season's supply of red jalapeno jelly and still had some empty canning jars left. Could I make prickly pear jelly? Why not!

Of course, I was completely ill prepared for such an adventure, but I've never let open-toed shoes and lack of proper equipment stop me before. Armed with a car rag and an empty Central Market shopping bag, I managed to pluck a scant three pounds of jewel-colored "tunas," as the ripe fruit is called.

There are at least a dozen different prickly pear cactus; the TAMU Aggie horticulture Web site lists ten species of prickly pear, all of which are of the *Opuntia* genus (family Cactaceae). Prickly pear cactus is native to the U.S., Mexico and South America. Because it adapts so well to a range in conditions and is tolerant of varied soils, temperatures and moisture levels, prickly pear can be found throughout Africa, Australia and the Mediterranean. In Sicily the fruit is an important agricultural crop and is raised on commercial plantations.

All prickly pears have fleshy, flat paddles that grow from 4- to 16-inches long, up to 9-inches wide and less than an inch thick. These pads -- called "nopales" when whole and "nopalitos" when diced -- are actually flattened stems, not leaves, and are generally oval in shape. Nopales have been eaten as a traditional vegetable in Mexican cuisine since before the Spanish conquistadores' arrival. Nopales taste something like green beans and have

an okra-like slime after cooking that can be rinsed off. Nopales can be eaten raw, boiled, fried, pickled or simmered; they are used in dishes ranging from salads to omelets to stews.

The prickly pear cactus flowers, which appear in late spring and early summer, are wide and bowl-shaped. The blooms vary in color from subtle off-white to brilliant orange, red and fuchsia. Different colors of flowers can appear within the same species, but yellow is the most common shade.

Each flower yields one prickly pear fruit, or "tuna." Fruit size, shape and color vary, but the sweetest varieties generally have dark red or purple skins and deep ruby-colored flesh. The fruits ripen through late fall (November) and taste similar to kiwi fruit, although the flavors can include strawberries, watermelons, honeydew melons, figs, bananas and citrus, depending on the variety. The tunas can be eaten raw, made into jams, or cooked down into syrup for making jelly and candy.

Of course no discussion of prickly pear cactus is complete without mention of thorns. Most species have long, sharp thorns that protrude in clusters from evenly spaced areoles on the pads. Historically, these large spines have been used as toothpicks, pins and even needles. But it's the tufts of fine, hair-like barbed spines called "glochids" that are the most painful. These tiny barbs are found just above the regular thorns and on the tunas. They are usually yellow or red in color, but difficult to see and almost impossible to remove. I know this to be true from personal experience.

Despite being named the Texas state plant in 1995, prickly pear is often perceived as a nuisance plant to livestock producers. Because prickly pear cactus propagates easily from seed and fallen pads, they can quickly spread in pastures that have been overgrazed or cleared, thus becoming a

problem for area ranchers. Livestock won't graze on grasses growing around cactus for fear of getting spines in their muzzles or tongues, often leaving a 6- to 8-inch buffer strip of grass around each cactus plant. As a result, large portions of range areas are left virtually useless. Millions of acres of Texas rangelands have been infested, prompting many landowners to try to control the spread of prickly pear infestation through burning and the application of herbicides.

Dethorned prickly pear pads can be used as supplemental fodder for livestock, especially during periods of drought where they may be the only source of food and water for range animals in arid regions. Generally, the pads should make up less than 50 percent of the animals' diet and be supplemented with a more protein-rich feed.

For home gardeners, prickly pear cactus makes an interesting and low-maintenance addition to the landscape, either as a specimen plant or grown into an ornamental yet impenetrable hedge or fence. The plants grow best in full sun in well-drained sandy loam. They are drought tolerant, but do require some protection against hard freezes and cold winter winds. Several spineless cultivars are available.

As for my jelly-making experience: it turned out surprisingly well. In the course of two afternoons -- one spent boiling down the syrup and one dedicated to preparing the jelly -- I managed to put up six pints. The color is a jewel-like ruby, and the taste is melon and kiwi. I'm thinking about entering a jar in this year's Gillespie County fair. Please wish me luck.

[
Flowers are words which even a babe may understand.
-Arthur Cleveland Coxe
]



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

September 5 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, meets at 2:00 p.m., Riverside Nature Center (RNC), 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville. Jackie Poole, Senior Botanist with the Wildlife Diversity Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Division, will discuss “Rare Plants of the Texas Hill Country.”

September 5 – 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). Presentation on “Shade Gardening with Native Plants” by Carl Green, Naturalist for Texas Parks & Wildlife in San Antonio.

September 6 - HCMG monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office. This meeting is extremely important because we'll be discussing the proposed by-laws amendments. Beth Patterson, Herb Association of Texas, will present “Gifts from the Herb Garden” and discuss the upcoming herb conference in San Antonio.

September 7 – RNC lunchtime Brown Bagger Series presents “Seeds: The Fruit of the Matter” by Barbara Lowenthal & Linda Riner. Bring a sack lunch (noon – 1:00 p.m.) Cost is \$3 for non-members of RNC and includes beverages & dessert. RNC members free.

September 13 – Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Central Texas Electric Co-Op Bldg., 386 Friendship Lane, Fredericksburg. Harold Pieratt, VP of HCMG, will make a presentation on “Garden Roses.”

September 16 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter, is hosting “Wildscapes: Gardening to Attract Wildlife” at Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg., Fredericksburg. 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Costs vary (box lunch & drinks included). Make your reservations early because seating is limited to 50.

September 19 - Kerr Cactus and Succulent Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.

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

September 22-23 – “A Celebration of the Herbal Harvest: A Focus on Culinary Herbs” will be hosted by The Herb Assoc. of Texas at the Antique Rose Emporium, 7561 Evans Rd., San Antonio. Contact Beth Patterson, The Herb Assoc. of Texas, P O Box 294298, Kerrville, TX 78029, 830/257-6732.

September 23 – Kerr County Market Days at Kerr County Courthouse, 9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m. Hill Country Master Gardeners have a booth and lots of plants for sale. Drop by early to get the best selection for your fall garden!

September 25 – Hill Country Master Naturalists meet at 7:00 p.m. at Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville. The program is “Guadalupe Bass Restoration Project” by Dr. Gary P. Garrett.

September 26 – 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. This month’s program is “Rainwater Harvesting for the Garden” by Dick Peterson, Environmental Program Coordinator for Austin Energy, Green Building Program.

September 30 – Cibolo Nature Center (CNC) & Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter, are hosting the Third Annual Tour of Yards. The free, self-guided tour will feature 10 spectacular yards. Maps for the tour, which winds its way through Boerne, Fair Oaks Ranch and other nearby neighborhoods, will be available at the CNC on the morning of Saturday, Sept. 30.

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, Carol Biggs

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

Leo Wagner, our newest Intern to complete his volunteer hours and become a “certified” Master Gardener. Way to go, Leo!

Anne Brown, Fay Drozd and Harold Pieratt for volunteering to teach classes this fall for Club Ed. Harold will conduct a class 9/21/06 on “Hill Country Garden Roses.” Anne’s class (10/12/06) is on “Oak Wilt – Theory, Treatment and Prevention.” Fay will teach “Plant Propagation” on 10/14/06.

Eleanor Baldwin, Anne Brown, Mildred Coggin, Fay Drozd and Huibert VanDemmeltraadt for weeding and cleaning up around our greenhouse.

Marilyn Pease and Huibert VanDemmeltraadt for manning the special Market Days booth. **Anne Brown and Fay Drozd** demonstrated rainwater harvesting.

Cheri Bolden, B.B. Browning, Otis Fox, Phyllis Knight, John Osborn, Tony Pacini and Ron Richerson, with the assistance of Community Service Workers, installed the irrigation system for our Demonstration Garden.

Anne Brown, B.B. Browning, Phyllis Knight, Diane McMahon, Tony Pacini, Randy Simmons and Huibert VanDemmeltraadt for completing the construction of the walkways in our Demonstration Garden.

John Osborn, Tony Pacini and Roy Walston for their hard work getting just the right design for our Demonstration Garden. We’ll have examples of different kinds of turf grasses and be able to invite our callers to come out and look at various grasses before they make their decision on what kind to plant.

Hours and Tracking

Master Gardeners thank you for all your volunteer hours and for turning in your time sheets. I spoke to **Marguerite Belec** while she was pruning the front flower bed at the Extension Office in almost 100 degree weather. THAT’S A VOLUNTEER. **Huibert VanDemmeltraadt** has also been working hard and has completed his required 12 hours of volunteer work and six hours of education this year to be recertified as a Master Gardener. Congratulations to Huibert.

by Ida Luckey, Chair

Bylaws Committee

Brief update on a few changes that were not highlighted in the newsletter last month.

Article 111. Membership

Section 4 Dues

Section 6 Recertification hours

Article V111. Committees

H. Archivist Committee

I. Volunteer Coordinator Committee

Four new committees will be added to this list:

J. Junior Master Gardeners

K. Greenhouse

L. Market Days

M. Demonstration Gardens

N. Mentors

PLEASE BRING YOUR COPY OF THE BYLAWS THAT IS IN THIS NEWSLETTER.

Thanks, Tommie Airhart

About Our Members

Intern Sherra Thomason underwent a bilateral mastectomy last week. She is doing well and is at home. We wish her speedy recovery!

Bylaws of the Hill Country Master Gardeners Revised March, 2006

Article I. Name.

The name of this organization shall be the Hill Country Master Gardeners.

Article II. Objective.

This organization shall be a non-profit, educational, literary and charitable association to support Texas Cooperative Extension. This organization is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by organization contributions which are deductible under Section 107 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). This organization shall not be affiliated with any commercial enterprises. Its objectives shall be:

- A. To increase the knowledge of gardening among members and the general public.
- B. To support and assist the Texas Agricultural Extension Service by providing the community with information on good gardening practices through educational projects, including publishing news articles and other mass media, presenting programs at garden clubs, schools and other community groups, and responding to telephone inquires.
- C. To assist Master Gardener Interns in fulfilling their volunteer commitment.

Article III. Membership.

Section 1. Members of this organization shall be graduates of a Texas Master Gardeners program and certified by Texas Cooperative Extension, the Texas A&M University System, or an equivalent Master Gardener program.

Section 2. Non-voting associate membership shall be extended to Master Gardener Interns in the Hill Country Master Gardener Program. No dues will be required of associate members.

Section 3. To maintain good standing, each member must have paid the dues for the current year.

Section 4. Dues set annually by members of this organization shall be payable in January. r

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

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.

Section 5. Associate members will be accepted into full membership upon certification with dues payable the following year.

Section 6. Members must be recertified each year to retain membership in the organization. Recertification hours will include a minimum of six hours of education and a minimum of twenty-five hours of Extension volunteer work.

Article IV. Meetings.

Section 1. Meetings will be held monthly unless otherwise announced.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Article V. Fiscal Year.

Section 1. The fiscal year of the organization shall run from January first to December thirty-first of each year.

Article VI. Officers.

Section 1. Officers of this organization shall be: President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. Officers shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and a slate of candidates shall be presented in October. Officers shall be elected at the November meeting, installed at the December meeting and assume their duties upon installation.

Section 3. Officers may be re-elected to the same office to serve the maximum of two full, consecutive terms.

Section 4. All nominees for office must be active members in good standing.

Article VII. Duties of Officers.

Section 1. The President shall:

- A. Preside at all meetings of the organization.
- B. Appoint a chairman of each standing committee and any special committees.
- C. Be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.
- D. Oversee the operation of the organization.

Section 2. The Vice-president shall:

- A. Take charge of meetings in the absence of the President.
- B. Attend committee meetings assigned by the President.
- C. Chair the Projects Committee.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

- A. Record the minutes of the meetings.
 - B. Be custodian of all records.
 - C. Be the corresponding secretary.
-

Section 4. The Treasurer shall:

- A. Be responsible for all receipts and disbursements of money in accordance with good fiscal policy.
- B. Keep adequate records of all financial transactions.

.Article VIII. Committees.

The need for standing or temporary committees shall be determined by the Executive Committee and appointments to these committees shall be made by the President.

Section 1. The standing committee chairs shall be appointed by the President.

Section 2. Certified members may serve as members and chairs of committees. Interns may serve only as members.

Section 3. The standing committees are:

A. Educational Committee, which:

- a. Shall plan and conduct Master Gardeners-in-training programs.
- b. Evaluate the Master Gardeners-in-training program.
- c. Obtain information from other Master Gardener programs.
- d. Plan future Master Gardener-in-training programs.

B. Horticulture Inquiry Committee, which:

- a. Shall be responsible for scheduling Master Gardeners and interns for service at the Extension office.
- b. Shall develop best practices in researching, communicating and documenting public inquiries.

C. Project Committee, which:

- a. Shall be responsible for the selection and completion of special projects.

D. Speaker Committee, which:

- a. Shall coordinate speaking engagements.

E. Nominating Committee, which:

- a. Shall consist of a chairman and two members who are not currently serving on the Executive Committee.
- b. Provide a slate of candidates for officers at the October meeting.

F. Program Committee, which:

- a. Shall be responsible for arranging programs for monthly meetings.

G. Public Relations Committee, which:

- a. Shall publicize the Master Gardener program and activities.

H. Archivist Committee, which:

- a. Shall document and maintain records of the organization's activities.

I. Volunteer Coordinator Committee, which:

- a. Shall organize volunteers for any event needed.

Article IX. Executive Committee.

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, who will serve as chairman, the Vice-president, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the immediate past-president who will serve as ex-officio advisor.

Section 2. The County Extension Agent shall serve as advisor to the Executive Committee.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly or when necessary.

Section 4. In the event a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee, said vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a person approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee and of the general membership.

Article X. Voting.

Section 1. A quorum shall consist of 51 percent of the active members present and voting.

Article XI. Amendments.

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the active membership.

Section 2. Notice of all proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be presented in writing at the regular monthly meeting with a copy mailed to absent members. Proposed amendments will be voted on at the next regular meeting. Members not present may vote by written proxy.

Article XII. Indemnification.

Section 1. Indemnification of Board of Directors.

The ~~Corporation~~ Organization shall indemnify its past and present Directors to the fullest extent permitted and in the manner provided by Article 1396-2.2A of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and other applicable laws, who were, are, or will be threatened to be named defendants or respondents in a proceeding because the persons are or were Directors in all instances, except if it is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction that the persons did not (i) conduct themselves in good faith, (ii) reasonably believe that his/her conduct was not opposed to the ~~Corporation's~~ Organization's best interest, and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, have reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful.

Section 2. Indemnification of Officers/Members

The ~~Corporation~~ Organization shall indemnify its past and present officers/members to the fullest extent permitted and in the manner provided by Article 1396-2.2A of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and other applicable laws, who were, are, or will be threatened to be named defendants or respondents in a proceeding because the persons are or were an officer/member in all instances, except if it is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction that the persons did not (i) conduct themselves in good faith, (ii) reasonably believe that their conduct was not opposed to the ~~Corporation's~~ Organization's best interest, and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, have reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful.