

April 2011
Volume 9, Issue 4

**April 4, 2011,
1:00 P.M. at Kerr
County AgriLife
Extension Office**

**Our speaker on
*Sex and the
Single Orchid*
is**

Dr. Mack Barham
(See Page 2 for details)

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President's Message - *Chris Seifert*

I love you, Hill Country Master Gardeners, because you celebrate success together. Hooray for **Carrie Musetti**, newly certified MG who is extending our influence in Gillespie County. Hooray for **Velma Workman**, who finished her hours just in time to be certified at our March meeting!

More success! During February we gave three formal presentations to a total of 52 people. We answered five phone inquiries and 326 non-members visited the website. It is so full of information, they surely found the answer to their questions and much more!

Yes, we are fulfilling the HCMG mission of increasing "knowledge of gardening to our members and the general public". My knowledge increases every time you share a favorite tip personally or in the newsletter. And of course, a lot of MGs work hard, providing us all with quality speakers, timely articles, and reminders about opportunities of all kinds.

Our collective passion, experience and knowledge are an amazing treasure. This year we are stepping up both quality and quantity of education to the public, one-on-one. Our market days will include "hot topics" and demonstrations, as well as plant sales. **Ron Smith** is looking for MGs willing to talk about whatever subject is particularly fun for them.

We are popular! Already we have eight or more invitations to host a Master Gardener booth at other organizations' events. Let's add a "hot topic" component to each of those events as well!

Are you uncomfortable talking to the public about a particular topic? Our strength is in teamwork! Let's create teams of people with like interests, so we are ready to provide friendly informal education as we have opportunity. Each team of four or five people would have a contact person, but together the team would devise the message and any handouts or illustrations used.

For instance, here's how it could work for a Compost Team - I would enjoy being the leader for that. (Hooray for me! I just finished my requirements for Compost Specialist.) If a few of you enjoy or would like to know more about composting, I would be happy to give you a special refresher, just so we'd have confidence in our information. We'd have a simple handout, and together we could compile a photo story board. Then at the May 28, Market Days we'd have a table next to the sale table, so we could encourage people to use compost and mulch effectively. We wouldn't need to be there the entire time, but it could be a lot of fun! Will you take my challenge and join me on a composting team?



Calendar of Events
by Betty West

(Attendance at events other than Master Gardener meetings is optional; events are listed for those wishing to attend other educational offerings. Be sure to call and confirm event.)

March 22 – HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. at the Ext. Office. The “*Job Fair*” will be presented by HCMG members and committees. Students only.

March 26 – Land Heritage Institute and NPSOT of San Antonio will co-sponsor 2nd annual “NATIVE san antonio” from 10 am – 2 pm on grounds of Land Heritage Inst. <http://www.landheritageinstitute.org/news.html>

March 29 – HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. at the Ext. Office. Dr. David Chalmers will present “*Lawns and Grass.*”

March 29 – Fredericksburg NPSOT meets at 7 p.m. at the Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg, 312 W. San Antonio St. Kathy Lyles will discuss “*Lessons Learned after 10 Years of Planting Natives in Fredericksburg.*” Visitors welcome.

April 4 – Kerrville Garden Club’s trip to The Rose Emporium in San Antonio. Meet at 10:30 a.m. at the old Luby’s parking lot on Sidney Baker to car pool.. Lunch in San Antonio, “*Roses in the Hill Country*” program and plant shopping. Contact vkilleen@stx.rr.com for information.

April 5 – HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. “*Earth Kind Landscapes Test.*” Doug Welsh Video. Students only.

April 5 – Kerrville NPSOT meets at Riverside Nature Center (RNC) at 7:00 p.m. Kathy Lyles will present “*Attracting and Nourishing Butterflies.*” Visitors welcome.

April 6 - HCMG Committee Chairs meet at 10:30 a.m. The monthly meeting is at 1:00 p.m. at Kerr County AgriLife Extension Office. *Program Speaker: Dr. Mack Barham has been growing orchids since 1978. He has been recognized for his work in plant culture and flower quality by The American Orchid Society.*

April 9 – HCMG Spring Plant & Rain Barrel Sale at Kerr County Extension Office parking lot (Ag Barn.) 9 am - 3 pm or until all are sold.

April 12 – HCMG training session. “*Field Trip*” for students only.

April 13 – Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Memorial Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 607 N. Milam. Carolee Youngblood will present “*Wildflower Pressing.*”

April 13 - Rose Garden Club of Medina meets at Medina Community Center (13857 St. Hwy. 16 N) at 2:00 p.m. Jana Osborne will discuss “*Food Preservation.*”

April 16 – Rose Garden Club of Medina Annual Plant Sale. Medina Community Center on Main at Hwy 16, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Plants, bird-houses and garden art. Raffle at 1:00 pm.

April 19 – Hunt Garden Club meets at the Hunt United Methodist Church’s Activity Hall. Brunch at 9:30 a.m. followed by the program at 10:00 a.m. Jessica Jobe will discuss “*Soil Health.*” Visitors welcome.

April 19 – HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. at the Ext. Office. Fay Drozd will present. “*Plant Propagation*” for students only.

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

April 23 – HCMG is hosting a booth at Kerr County Trade Days - courthouse grounds from 9 am-4 pm. Plant sales and demo program.

HILL COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS MEETING MINUTES for FEBRUARY 02, 2011

The meeting was called to order by President *Chris Seifert*, at 2:06 pm after the conclusion of the presentation by *Wayne Seifert* on "Arthropods in the Garden." There were 47 members in attendance.

Business Matters:

- The February Meeting minutes were approved as written in the newsletter.
- *Roy Eliff*, Treasurer, said we have \$16,060 in the general fund and \$58,000 in the scholarship fund. He submitted the dues to the Texas Master Gardeners Association and all other received bills have been paid at the end of February.

Opportunities and Announcements:

Greenhouse: *Anne Brown* revealed that the greenhouse is growing. Last week she and Vickie Killeen completed the paperwork to get our Texas "Nursery Floral Certificate" and our greenhouse passed their inspection. Permits will be obtained for each plant sale. They have been purchasing plants for the upcoming plants sales. Another potting party is scheduled for tomorrow. The shade cloth had to be put on last month because the fiber ripped during the high winds. The fiber will need to be replaced this year. The watering schedule is every three days now and will go to every day in April and a sign up sheet was passed around.

Tom Daniel Science Day, Friday March 11: *Sandy Martin* invited anyone wishing to help with the 3rd grade Science Expo Day to do so. Volunteer hours are 8:00 am to noon and both breakfast and lunch will be available. There will be 110 students divided into five groups.

Junior Master Gardener Program Certification: *Sandy Martin* announced that she and *Carol Hagemeyer* had attended the training and are now certified. This is a national program which was started in Texas providing education to elementary and above students. Test scores in literature, math and sciences have increased for those students who have gone through the program. Sandy brought three of the books for our information: *Literature in the Garden*, *Health and Nutrition*, and *Wildlife in the Garden*.

Hunt Methodist Church: *Sandy Martin* told us the church will be doing a landscape plan and anyone wanting to help should contact her.

Plant Sales: *Ron Smith* re-announced the two plant sales for the year in our parking lot: Saturday, April 9th (changed

from Friday, April 8th) and Saturday, October 8th with public hours from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm or until the plants are all sold. Volunteer hours start at 7:30 am for the sale events and shifts will be posted on the sign up sheets in the office or you can email him with your preference. The plant list for the sale is now available on our website <http://hillcountymastergardeners.org> and will be updated accordingly.

We will also have four Kerr County Market Days: April 23rd, May 28th, June 25th and July 23rd. We have arranged for the regular booth to sell plants and an additional booth to offer educational demonstrations to the public. Master Gardeners with specialized training should contact him with their desire to do a presentation.

Cibolo Nature Center: *Kathy Russell* announced we will have an educational booth at the Kendall County Fair Grounds in Boerne on Saturday, April 2nd. The purpose of the booth is to reach out to the public by answering questions on gardening, composting, rain barrels and plants. Also, to distribute and discuss MG brochures and use information on our board as a reference to interested persons. Two shifts will be available between 8:30 am and 3:30 pm. There will also be a *Mostly Native Plant Sale* at the event.

Bandera County Green Show, Saturday, March 19th from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. *Cheri Bolden* announced volunteer opportunities still available.

Demo Garden Announcement: *The Buchens* want to have the gardens looking good for the April 9th plant sale and passed around a sign-up sheet for next week.

Barbara Elmore, V.P. & Membership Chair, announced that two 2010 interns had completed their certification. Congratulations to *Carrie Musetti* and *Velda Workman*.

New name tags will be ordered now that the membership roster has been finalized. New membership cards will be available at next month's meeting. Our Timekeeper informed her that the first MG to submit hours on the new timesheet form was *Velda Workman*.

Texas MG Association: *Anne Brown* and *Fay Drozd* attended the state TMGA meeting in College Station last month. The focus of the meeting was how the association can support the 66 member associations. The State Conference is on April 27-29th in Glen Rose.

People with Dirty Hands

We HCMGs have had three pot(ting) parties. The first was attended by Dusty Gilliam, Carolyn Nall, Sherry Egloff, Lee Fry, and Vickie Killeen.



The second, where this picture was taken, was attended by Ida Luckey, Jackie Connelly, Dusty Gilliam, Carolyn Nall, Lee Fry, Tommie Airhart, Pat McCormick, Joyce Studer, June Sher, Velda Workman, Dorothy Coppinger, Sherry Egloff, Terri DeBusk, Robert Hocker, Randy and Judy Simmons, and Anne Brown. So far we have potted up about 450 plants, and there are more to come.

For the third time in less than a month volunteers potted plants for the April 9 Annual Plant and Rain Barrel Sale. Enjoying a gorgeous spring-like morning on March 3 were Anne Moss (who donated sunflowers), Dusty Gilliam, June Sher, Carolyn Nall, Lee Fry, Faye Drozd, Craig Tucker, Jackie Connelly and Ron Smith. With such an able crew, Anne and Vickie were able to get about 200 plants potted, watered and sorted in about 1 hour. Now that's teamwork!

Need to kill cactus? Scrap the cactus into piles, add some molasses and allow to break down. It makes a wonderful compost. Use dry or liquid molasses at 2 cups per cubic yard or greater.



Newly certified Velda Workman and President Chris Seifert

Green Step



Why Buy Local Sustainably Produced Food?

It is fresher: Conventional produce in the U.S travels over 1,500 miles from farm to fridge. (Holly Hill, 2008)

It is healthier: Many fruits and vegetables grown without pesticides and herbicides contain twice the amount of cancer-fighting antioxidants than their sprayed peers. (Brian Halwell, 2007)

It is greener: Producing one ton of fertilizer requires as much as 33,000 cubic feet of natural gas. (Anna Lappe, 2010)

Bernadell Larson



Another Weapon in the Oak Wilt War

Wayne Seifert, entomologist and our March speaker told of an **INSECT SYRUP TRAP** to catch the tiny sap beetles that carry the oak wilt pathogen from tree to tree. Directions follow:



Nitidulid beetle

1. Mix 1 gal. of warm water per 2 pounds of brown sugar.
2. Add your favorite yeast.
3. Let this set at least three days – it should have a fermented smell.
4. Cut a couple holes in a gallon milk jug and tie a string to the handle.
5. Fill the jug about half full of your brew and hang among your oak trees.
6. In a couple days strain out the insects and pour the solution back into the jug.
7. Add additional solution as needed.
8. Sort through your insects. Remember the sap beetles are very small. Use the *Kaufman Guide* to identify your catch.
9. If you find some unusual insects or want to confirm your identifications put the insects in some alcohol (dilute rubbing alcohol about 50/50) and bring them to Chris Seifert.



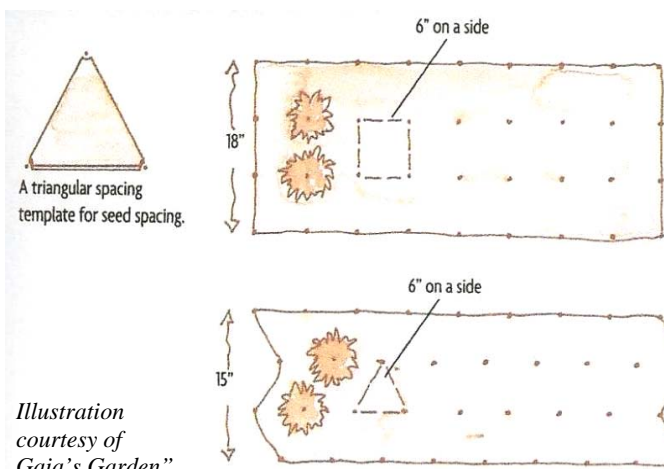
TRIANGULAR NET GARDEN PLAN by Bernadell Larson

Want to plant a flower or vegetable garden, but are limited on space? Instead of planting seeds or transplants in a straight line in your bed, use a triangular spacing concept. (See picture below.)

If you plant four rows of seeds 6 inches apart and use the typical rectangular spacing concept, you will need a bed that is 18 inches wide. However, if you plant four rows of seeds 6 inches apart and use the triangular spacing concept, you will only need a bed that is 15 inches wide. Your plants will not be crowded and you have the same amount of air circulating between and among your plants. Another benefit is that your plantings will appear denser because, visually, you will see more green instead of open space between the plants.

This triangular net pattern works on orchards also. In drylands, orchardists plant their trees in a triangular net pattern to collect rain and runoff. Fruit trees can be planted in small depressions, and the basins are connected by a network of shallow trenches. The rain and runoff falling over a large area are collected by the trench network and delivered to the base of the trees.

A triangular net pattern allows more seeds, plants, trees to be planted in the same space than the conventional rectangular pattern.





**Plant diary 2011:
five keepers**

By Barbara Elmore

With Webmaster Carol Brinkman's request for "before" and "after" photos of our gardens in mind, I took out my camera in early March and began recording plant history.

Also in my head were the words of a helper at a peach tree event I attended in late February. I was looking at the varieties of peach trees I was taking home after the event, and joked that it was easier for her family to keep them straight, with their entire orchards, than for growers of a few trees planted willy-nilly. Big growers plant a whole row or block with just one kind.

She said I should keep a journal. Of course she's right -- but how many of us do that? I seem to journal everything, but my garden is a journal-free zone. It's a sanctuary, a confessional, neighborhood meeting spot -- even a place to try out words I don't necessarily want to repeat.

But journaling with a digital camera is easy. So, with thanks to Carol, here is my report on what pulled through a too-cold-for-comfort February unscathed:

Jerusalem sage, *Phlomis fruticosa*. I have written about this attention-getter before. The first time I saw it, I was in a McDonald's drive-through lane and the yellow blooms were profuse. I found it at a local nursery where a worker told me it was a tough little plant that could take our heat and

drought and still keep its good looks. That was almost two years ago. Its leaves droop slightly when the temperature drops below freezing. That's pretty much it. Full sun.

Powis castle Artemisia. Don't grow this for the flowers, because there is nothing much to speak of



in that area. Grow it for the foliage. What a welcome sight this delicate-looking, silvery plant is in the winter when almost everything else is an ugly twig. It needs a little cutting back to shape it up so it's not growing into everything else, but it will handle a harsh winter and a deadly dry summer with grace. It likes full sun but will handle some shade.

Day lilies, *Hemerocallis*. Mine are the gold cultivar "Stella de Oro" that I bought in Waco, divided, shared, and transplanted here. But there are more than 35,000 cultivars in almost every color. These were happily coming up in February and I am looking forward to their May blooms. Plant in full sun.



Texas winecup, *Callirhoe involucrata*. I am related to someone who prefers a tamer garden than my wilder setting. But the purple blooms of this native, planted right by our driveway, attract her interest every year. "What are those?" she asks. "Winecups," I say with a smirk. I might just sneak some into her neat landscape. They bloom from early spring through summer, even in a tame garden. And the leaves, which stay green throughout a bitter winter, aren't bad. Full sun.

Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*. This graces both our back yard, where the dogs are busy, and in the front, our dog-free zone. White in the back and probably gold in the front, although memory escapes me. The foliage is ferny and ranges in color from silver to bright green. The white variety puts out white flowers on tall stalks through May and perhaps even beyond. Full sun to partial shade.

These five will serve as my plant diary for both personal and HCMG website use. What's in YOUR landscape?

Nasturtiums

(*Tropaeolum majus*)

by Judy Fleming



Are you ready to add some beauty and color to your garden, repel pests and amend your salad bowl?

Nasturtiums are just the thing! The colorful flowers are gorgeous in a pot or as an edging plant in your garden. All parts of the plant are edible. The flowers may be strewn over salad, the leaves add a peppery flavor to sandwiches, salads and stir-fry; and the unripe seeds may be pickled as a substitute for capers. The *mashua tuberosum* variety produces an edible tuber that is a major food source in parts of the Andes. Although the most common use of the nasturtium plant is as an ornamental flower, they also repel a great many pests, like squash bugs, cucumber beetles, and several caterpillars. They are additionally great companion plants for broccoli and cauliflower. They are considered a “trap” plant and attract aphids and whiteflies away from other plants in the garden.

Although nasturtiums can be started in early spring indoors, the best method of growing them is by directly sowing the seeds about an inch deep in moist, well-drained soil. The



large seedling will emerge within a couple of days, and much like beans, are fun and interesting for children to watch grow. Plant them with tomatoes, radishes, cabbage, cucumbers, and under fruit trees. Plant them 8 – 12 inches apart in the garden and be sure to keep them well watered in the growing season. Pick the blooms freely once they start coming, and you will have many more during the

summer. If you do notice aphids you can spray them with a safe soap, alcohol and water mixture. Remember, as with vegetables, you don't want to use chemicals on your plants.

The following is a recipe by Marion Owen from her web site www.plantea.com.

Marion Owen's Poor Man's Capers

Real capers are pickled buds from the caper bush, a perennial shrub that thrives in the Mediterranean region. Capers are a gourmet condiment and these pickled nasturtium seeds are an impressive substitute.

Pick the half-ripened (still green) nasturtium seed pods. Continue picking as long as the seed crop continues. Drop them in a boiled and cooled mixture of:

- 1 quart white wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons pickling salt
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 lemon, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon pickling spice
- 1 clove garlic, smashed
- 4 to 6 peppercorns
- 1/2 teaspoon celery seed

Keep the mixture refrigerated and use the nasturtium pickles in sauces, dips, casseroles, soups, stews and as edible decorations. For an added attraction, freeze 2 or 3 nasturtium capers in ice cube trays and use them to dress up your next glass of V-8 or favorite ale.



Meet the Last of the 2011 Students



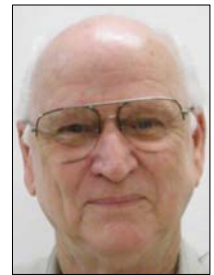
Valerie Fishell hales from Michigan where she was born and raised on a farm. She has a BS in Animal Science from Michigan State and Masters in Meat Science from Purdue. Valerie taught at Purdue and Penn State University. She has traveled all over the US - and the world - but finally settled in the Hill Country in June of 2010. She is loving the *no snow* winters. Now that she is retired she is able to spend more time on her jewelry making hobby.

Roylynn Brocksch is from Fredericksburg . She loves to restore quirky, interesting old homes and then fill them with antiques she has restored and refinished. Roylynn has a border collie named *Tator*, who has made friends with lots of the walkers who pass by. *Tator* is very fond of those who have dogs with them. Her black cat *Pepper* is interested in anything that moves. Her grandchildren say “*Oma is flowering*” when she is out in the garden so she has them join her. It seems the flower garden out in front of Roylynn’s home is a great place to meet and make new friends.

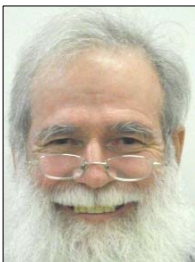


Lenore Langsdorf is a professor at Schreiner University and at a college in San Antonio. She is also working on being certified as a Master Naturalist .

Milton Wilson lives in Kerrville and is recently retired. He is a man of few words.



Vern Crawford’s Hill Country roots span five generations. He loves to work with his hands and has been creating some wonderful garden areas on his property. Vern is a baker and has formulated bread recipes and techniques. (I think a bread class could be in the making.) Along with all his creativity he has traveled the back roads of Texas covering almost every county in the state. He has traded yarns and tall tales with every old timer he has met during his travels.



Bea Borton lives in Stonewall with her husband and two boys, 7 and 8. She was born and raised in France where she was a French teacher. Bea met her husband when she was an exchange student. They now own a lavender farm that they first planted in 2006. Bea is also interested in herb and vegetable gardening. In her spare time she is also a den mother for her children’s Cub Scout troop.



Tomato Survey Tomatoes with the names that include “Boy,” “Girl” or “Beef” are always popular, but are you tempted to try planting any other types of tomatoes? I would like to know which HCMG members are planning to grow either heirloom or less common varieties of tomatoes this year. This will become part of a survey – to be done later in the season -- to determine which lesser-known varieties grow best in home gardens in this area, based on characteristics such as insect, disease and heat resistance, as well as taste and appearance. Please contact Anne Moss by email or phone. (*Interns and students are also welcome to participate!*)



ALL THINGS EDIBLE
April 2011
by Pam Bresler

With 80° temperatures, you are probably in frantic gardening mode. That's why they call it Spring Fever! For most veggie gardeners, it's time for the Great Tomato Dilemma: yes, it is 80°, but are you sure

it won't freeze again? For small, indeterminate tomatoes, such as Juliet and Sweet 100, early planting is not so critical, as they will set fruit all through our hottest months. However, for the large-fruited determinate varieties, the earlier you get them planted the better. Temperatures over 85-95°s, depending on variety, causes the pollen to be sterile so you won't get fruit set. Some larger tomatoes will not set fruit if nighttime temperatures are over 70° or under 50°. Picky, picky, picky!

My tomato planting ritual resembles some elaborate voodoo incantation. I do everything except read chicken entrails and chant. At the risk of hurting yourself falling on the floor laughing, here is my method. Scrape back the mulch from the soil in a 2' diameter. If you have tall tomato plants, dig a hole as deep as possible, about 9" in my raised bed. Remove lower leaves from the tomatoes. Deeply planted tomatoes develop big root systems, are able to find moisture when surface soil dries and are more stable in high winds. Dust the root ball with a tablespoon of rock phosphate powder, letting the excess fall into the hole. Place the root ball in the bottom of the hole and back fill. Gently press soil around the tomato. Sprinkle 1/4 cup of Epsom salts and 1 cup of whole ground cornmeal over a 2' circle. Sprinkle 1/2 cup of a balanced organic fertilizer in a 1' circle around the plant. With hand cultivator, gently scratch in the soil amendments. Now you need a "cutworm collar." Place a 2" tall ring of plastic or cardboard around the stem. I use rings cut from bleach bottles or milk jugs. Gently water in the tomato plant and amendments with a fine spray or a watering can. Gently push a tomato cage into the soil, centered around the plant. Wrap the cage with floating row cover and secure with clothespins. If you want to prevent insects and the

diseases they carry, you can also wrap the top and completely enclose the cage.

You'll never confront a giant tomato hornworm if the cage is totally wrapped. Now, re-apply the mulch you removed, so that soil-borne fungal disease spores don't splash onto lower leaves. Congratulations, you've planted one tomato!



Because tomatoes are wind pollinated, you don't have to worry about excluding insects from your wrapped cage. You can shake the cage when you walk by to increase pollination. In greenhouse production, electric vibrators or fans are used for tomato pollination. Research shows that vibrating tomato plants every other day between 10 am-2 pm gives the best results. Try explaining to your spouse that you have a date to vibrate your tomatoes!

The advantages of caging your tomato plants are not having to tie them onto a stake, train to a single stalk or prune axial suckers. The best tomato cages are cylinders made from concrete reinforcing wire. They are very sturdy and with the lower wire ring removed, you have wire "spikes" to push into the ground. The cages are 5' high with an 18" diameter. In high wind, a wrapped cage can become a box kite, so use short pieces of rebar or landscape pins to anchor them in the soil. Commercial cages work also, but buy the larger size in case you grow indeterminate tomatoes.



Continues on Page 10, bottom of middle column:

Hill Country Master
Gardeners 2011 Executive
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Barbara Elmore - Vice President
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Roy Eliff - Treasurer
Randy Simmons - Ex-officio Advisor
Roy Walston - C.E.A. Advisor

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**Greenhouse: Vickie Killeen
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Environmental Reporter

Bernadell Larson

Webmaster - Carol Brinkman

**Web Assistants - Anne Moss,
Julie Bartosh, & Betty West**

Submissions to baldwin@kctc.com

March minutes continued::

Chris Seifert, President, will be meeting with Fredericksburg AgriLife Agent, *Deckie Spiller* this month. She has met with *Warren Thigpen*, Bandera County and *Stephen Zoeller*, Kendall County AgriLife Extension Agents. Chris will be setting up meetings with those Master Gardeners in those counties to review the volunteer opportunities available to them locally.

Melva Chancellor passed around a sign up sheet for anyone interested in getting on our last month's presenter, Bill Varney of *URBANherbal*, email list.

Chris Seifert handed out the upcoming Texas Master Gardener Association Specialist Trainings. The link to review the programs is: <http://txmg.org/member-information/specialist-training-2010/> and then click on Training heading.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 pm.

The next HCMG meeting will be held at 1 pm, Wednesday April 6, 2011, in the AgriLife Building Classroom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Connelly,
Secretary



All Things Editable continued from Page 9::

Square cages that fold for storage are convenient. Some tomato growers tie their plants onto 4' high cattle panels, 6'-20' long. Gardener's Supply has beautiful "rainbow spirals" which could turn your tomato patch into a sculpture garden. You do have to encourage the tomatoes to spiral: http://www.gardeners.com/Rainbow-Spiral-Supports/VegetableGardening_Supports,36-377,default,cp.html

Since I have completely ignored all the other wonderful vegetables you will plant this month, run by the Plant Haus and pick up their free planting guide. All the planting dates for spring and fall vegetables are on one handy page near the bulk seed bins.

Keep doing your rain dance!



**Webmaster Carol
Brinkman's**

Website of the Month

If you are a subscriber of *Texas Gardener* magazine then you can skip this month's website recommendation.

If you are not, and like me, don't dare subscribe to another gardening magazine, then you might want to check out their website: (<http://www.texasgardener.com/>)

This site definitely does not replace the subscription; however, it does have some features of interest. You can sign up for a weekly email newsletter that includes a robust state-wide *Calendar of Events*. Or, you can read one or two of the current month's columns. Or, you can shop. From an index of articles dating from 2007, order one of particular interest. And, don't miss their selection of Texas-centered gardening books. These are nice folks — they have a link from their "Other Links" *to our website!*

