

February 2011
Volume 9, Issue 2

**February 2, 2011,
1:00 P.M. at Kerr
County AgriLife
Extension Office**

**Our speaker on
*Growing and
Cooking with
Herbs***

is Bill Varney
(See page 2,
column 1 for details)

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President's Message - *Chris Seifert*

February! The month I anticipate new sowing, new harvest and new opportunity!

And so it is for our Hill Country Master Gardener organization. New, better, informative and exciting is around the corner – thanks to you!

Congratulations to **William Lange, John LaRoche** and **Annie Rendon**, our first certified Master Gardeners of 2011! Each excels in personal initiative. As you know, John developed the incredible members' database. Annie and William turned their energy toward initiating a new public garden next to Harper's library. (MG **Terri DeBusk** is our contact/advisor for that project, approved 2010.)

On another topic, to all who have questions about earning and counting volunteer, education or travel hours, February 2nd is your day! I seriously doubt that any of us *like* this subject, but we are clearing the air once and for all.

January 21st your Executive Committee will probably conditionally approve a revised and clarified version of HCMG Timekeeping Rules. Then members will receive a copy to review carefully before our general meeting, February 2nd. The ad hoc committee of veteran and novice MGs, headed by **Tommie Airhart**, will answer questions, explain rationale and address any additional concerns from the membership. *Our goal is to finalize operational rules which we all understand and can live with agreeably.*

Our AgriLife director, Dr. Doug Welsh addressed the Texas Master Gardener December Board of Directors meeting. His message had some good news, but also challenges. A summary of Dr. Welsh's comments follows:

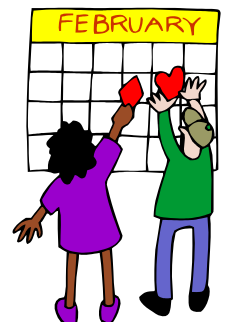
► Texas has the largest and best Master Gardener Program in the nation – over double the second place state's total volunteer hours. The 2009 stats show over 1/2 million volunteer hours, equaling 260 full-time employees worth \$10.5 million. MasterGardeners are the front line of AgriLife Extension.

► The Junior MG Program, started by AgriLife Extension, is now a world-wide program, using the same basic model developed right here in Texas.

► AgriLife Extension continues to endure drastic funding reductions which resulted in the loss of 90+ positions in this biennial budget and potentially 120-150 positions in the 2012-2013 budget cycle.

► Carry the message – times are tough, we have work to do, no time for conflict. Have fun, and thank you, thank you, thank you.

There's an old saying that volunteers are unpaid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless!





**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.)

January 25 - HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. Dr. Joe Masabni's topic is "Vegetables."

January 25 – Fredericksburg NPSOT meets at 7 p.m. at the Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg, 312 W. San Antonio St. Visitors welcome.

February 1 – HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. at the Ext. Office. Dr. Larry Stein will address "Fruit and Nut Trees."

February 1 – Kerrville NPSOT meets at Riverside Nature Center (RNC). Refreshments served at 1:30 p.m. followed by the program at 2:00 p.m. John Ahrens will discuss "The Rediscovery of Hammett's Crossing ... The Westcave Preserve Story." Visitors welcome.

February 2 - HCMG Executive Committee and Committee Chairs will meet at 10:30 a.m. Our HCMG monthly meeting is at 1:00 p.m. at Kerr County AgriLife Extension Office.

Program:

Bill Varney, founder and previous owner of Fredericksburg Herb Farm (FHF), is our speaker. He retained the green houses when he sold FHF and established URBANherbal.



He's the author of two books, *Along the Garden Path* and *Herbs: Growing and Using the Plants of Romance*. He'll address both growing and cooking with herbs.

February 7 – Kerrville Garden Club meets at 1:00 p.m. and visitors are welcome. Judith Anderson will discuss "Butterflies." Contact Vickie Killeen at vkilleen@stx.rr.com to make reservations and get this month's meeting location.

February 8 – HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. at the Ext. Office. Dr. Noel Troxclair will discuss "Concepts of Insects."

February 9 – Fredericksburg Garden Club meets at 2:00 p.m. at the Memorial Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 607 N. Milam.

February 15 – Hunt Garden Club meets at the Hunt United Methodist Church's Activity Hall. Brunch is served at 9:30 a.m. followed by the program at 10:00 a.m. Allen Duncan, Kerr County Cactus & Succulent Society, will discuss "The Cactus Family." Visitors welcome.

February 15 – HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. at the Ext. Office. Anne Graves' topic is "Plant Biology."

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

February 22– HCMG classroom training session at 1 p.m. at the Ext. Office. Dr. Mark Black will address "Concepts of Plant Diseases."

February 22 - Fredericksburg NPSOT meets at 7 p.m. at the Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg, 312 W. San Antonio St. Visitors welcome.

February 26 – Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne, hosts "Rainwater Harvest Workshop" from 9 a.m. to noon at CNC Library and a visit to Kight installation. For costs and information <http://www.cibolo.org/rainwaterharvestworkshop-2>

HCMGs at the 2010 Annual Pecan Show by Jackie Connelly

Hi all - does it look like we are having fun YET? Look how intense we were trying to get all those pecans (and pieces) out of those shells. These were the Day 2 pickers.

This was my first year at it and I had lots of fun chatting with the other MGs while trying not to eat the pecans nor miss any little remnant on the plate.



Left Side:
Fay Drozd
Doris Tyler
Velda Workman
BB Browning

Right Side:
Jackie Connelly
Diane McMahon
Dorothy Buchen
David Buchen

Recycle your flower pots! by Anne Moss

Two ways to get rid of those accumulating plastic pots:

Member **Carolyn Nall** would like to have your one-gallon plastic pots for her own plant propagation projects. (Note: one-gallon pots are usually about 6 ½ inches tall and wide.) Contact Carolyn: (830) 895-0514 or chnall@sbcglobal.net.

The **Kerrville Community Recycling Center** is now accepting plastic items numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. (Look for the recycling number inside a triangle on plastic items.) For hours of business and more information, see [here](#)



Patti Schlessiger (left) and **Lindsey Forster** at the AgriLife office have been a wonderful help to us. They wrote a lovely thank you note for their special Christmas gifts of \$25.

Photo by Marilyn Pease

Green Step



Recycle your worn out athletic shoes!

Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe program accepts old shoes and turns them into a material called Nike Grind, which is used to surface playgrounds, gym floors, and running tracks. Shoes are accepted at retail outlets and authorized drop off locations. Since there are no drop off locations close to us, take them to the closest retail location.

Bernadell Larson

Behind the Scenes at Of Leaf & Limb

By Eleanor Baldwin, Editor



Early each month, I begin receiving email articles. Our regular writers know the earlier things are in, the better the placement. This month we begin the first of three months when **Debbie Russell**, Education Chair, needs a page for the new students' photos and bios. Also room must be found for **Jackie Connelly's** monthly meeting minutes, notice of the coming meeting program, and the president's message.

Items come from the many versions of software our writers use, so they must first be converted into my version of Word, so they will fit into my publishing program. Debbie's pictures are picked off one-by-one, cropped and made to look their best, then moved into the publishing program, along with each individual bio. Takes a while!

Our Information Chair, **Betty West**, is also an assistant editor. She compiles the monthly schedule, as well as does frequent re-writes since she has that

special talent. Our other assistant editor, **Kathie Marlow**, compiles a landscape gardening column but has given up mailing the newsletter to the few non-computerized members, since our Office Manager, **Judy Simmons**, now does that for us.

Who knew bugs could be so entertaining? **Marilyn Pease** – who began as our photographer - continues to work on her *Entomology* certification by writing each month on insects. . .but still takes photos.

Pam Bresler has just taken over the vegetable gardening column from **Christine Millar** and her second article is in this issue. **Judy Fleming** is off to India for several months and will probably come home with exotic herbal remedies to write about in her coming columns.

Barbara Elmore, our V.P., is a professional writer on various gardening subjects. She is also our V. P. in charge of membership. **Bernadell Larson**, who probably has the most difficult job of all finding relevant topics, comes up with those *Green Step* ideas each month, as well as environmental articles with illustrations.

Carol Brinkman is our webmaster - a really big job - but she also takes beautiful floral pictures, writes an occasional column, does some proofing and checks out interesting websites every month. We couldn't do without her and her ever alert researcher, **Anne Moss**.

When the 10-page newsletter is completed, it is sent to Webmaster Carol. She converts it into PDF format and also sends it on to **Julie Bartosh** for final proofing and to **Betty West** to check that names are properly spelled. When corrections have been made to the master copy by me, it goes to the webmaster. Carol puts it up on the website and Betty sends out her notice that it is ready for you to read.



(Left) Junior Master Gardeners **Medina Garden Patch** harvesting winter crops on January 11, 2011 with the help of the Rose Garden Club of Medina volunteers.

Photos & Collage by Eleanor Vandergriff
Rose Garden Club of Medina

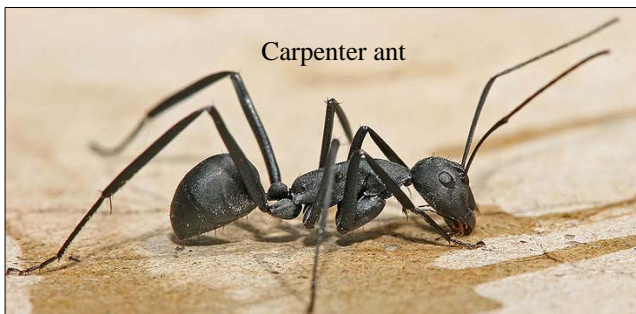


WHAT IS ENTOMOTHERAPY?

by Marilyn Pease

As long ago as Egyptian times or perhaps longer, people were using insects as medicines for healing wounds, preventing infections and improving health. Some of these are purely anecdotal, while others have proven basis in fact as tested by modern medicine.

Ants, particularly large ants such as carpenter ants, have been used as wound closures in many parts of the world. Employing their strong jaws, the ants can be applied along a laceration, forcing them to bite into both sides of the cut. The thorax and abdomen are then pinched off, leaving the head intact with the jaws clamped around the wound like a little row of sutures. As the wound closed and dried, forming a scab, the heads would fall off naturally.



There has been much research on the beneficial effects of blow fly maggots in debriding ulcerated wounds. This phenomenon was first noticed on battlefields during the Civil War when surgeons realized that maggot infested wounds appeared to heal much quicker than those not infested. Now don't be too grossed out, as nowadays the maggots used are specially bred and sterilized ones raised in labs under controlled conditions. Not only do they get rid of diseased tissue at the site, but they produce a natural chemical compound called allantoin which has the added benefit of

aiding in healing and is also helpful in the treatment of osteomyelitis. In the UK, the use of maggots is more common and has been named *biosurgery*.

Blister beetles (*Meloidae*) are so called because of a toxic compound secreted as a defense mechanism.

This compound is cantharidin and does actually blister the skin if one is exposed. Interestingly, this same compound was approved by the FDA in 2004 as a wart



Black blister beetle

removal compound. It is also used in the treatment of urinary tract infections.

One of the more frequent usages of insect products involves honey bees. This practice is called apitherapy. Application of honey to a wound has been found to aid in healing through the action of glucose oxidase which converts to hydrogen peroxide, a known wound cleanser. Bee and wasp venom has been used for many years in the formulation of allergy shot serum which is given to those individuals who are allergic to bee stings. There have also been studies on the benefits of bee venom in treating arthritis. Bee pollen has been consumed for years by many who tout its benefits as a source of energy. While this claim has not been proven, bee pollen does contain 55% carbs and 35% protein as well as minerals, vitamins and many antioxidants.

I guess I should end with a disclaimer which cautions the reader not to go out and eat bugs without checking with their physician first!

**HILL COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
JANUARY 5, 2011 - MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by V.P **Barbara Elmore** at 1:05 pm. No formal business meeting was conducted on December 1st due to the Christmas Party; therefore, no formal meeting minutes were taken or needed to be approved.

Roy Eliff, Treasurer, gave a brief report: \$19K in checking, \$58K in savings. He announced we are starting this year with just about \$3,000+ over last year. He has received 60 paid 2011 Membership Dues and there are 38 non-paid members to date.

The following announcements were made:

- **Barbara Elmore** announced three interns have completed the requirements to become certified Master Gardeners: **William Lange, John La-Roche** and **Annie Rendon**. Congratulations to all.

- There has been a change in the Greenhouse Committee as announced in the last newsletter. Due to family health issues, **Marilyn Pease** has resigned and **Anne Brown** will take her duties as co-chair with **Vickie Killeen**. Thanks to Marilyn, Anne and Vickie for all their contributions.

- **Ron Smith**, Chairman of the Market Days Committee, will meet directly after this meeting in the business office.

- During the break, **Julie Bartosh**, Coordinator Logo Development Group, handed out our new logo-wear ordered at last month's Christmas party. She will also be taking new orders. This will be the last time to place orders for a while.

- **Joyce Studer** presented a recap of the approved project, *Fredericksberg Lipe Memorial Garden*.

- **Barbara Elmore**, VP and Membership Committee Chair, announced that a letter will be going out to every MG on the roster. Membership dues were to be received by 12/31/10 and if not paid, are now considered past due. Dues for 2011 are \$18 for newly certified and recertified Master Gardeners. Volunteer/CEU hour documentation which is needed for Master Gardeners to get recertified was also due by 12/31/10. The letter will also advise

members on how to request a *Leave of Absence*. This must be in writing to the president and be accompanied by the \$18 yearly fee. A *Leave of Absence* can be extended for an additional year. This letter might not be applicable to all members but Barbara hopes everyone reads it in its entirety.

- A formal HCMG roster report is required to be furnished to the Texas Master Gardeners Association with our chapters' dues payment by March 1st. At the end of January, new name badges will be ordered from that list of 2011 Certified Master Gardeners.

- The Texas Master Gardener Association Conference will be held in Glen Rose, TX, April 27-29, 2011. Anyone interested in coordinating our members attendance please contact **Carol Brinkman** or **Kathie Marlow**.

- **Dorothy Buchen**, Co-Chair of the Demo Garden, announced a "clean up day" Wednesday, January 19th, and passed around a sign-up sheet.

- **Debbie Russell**, Education Chair, has updated student workbooks for sale if anyone is interested.

- **Rose Marie Mazanke** announced that she was collecting updated "bios" for the group information booklet being prepared on our organization.

- **Jim Latham** will be taking member pictures to be incorporated in the information booklet.

There being no further business, **Barbara Elmore** adjourned the meeting at 1:45 pm.

June Sher, Mentor Committee Chair, introduced the 2011 mentors who then introduced their assigned students. After all the introductions, refreshments were served and HCMG members welcomed the Class of 2011.

The next HCMG meeting will be held at 1 pm, Wednesday, February 2, 2011, in the AgriLife classroom.



Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Connelly, Secretary



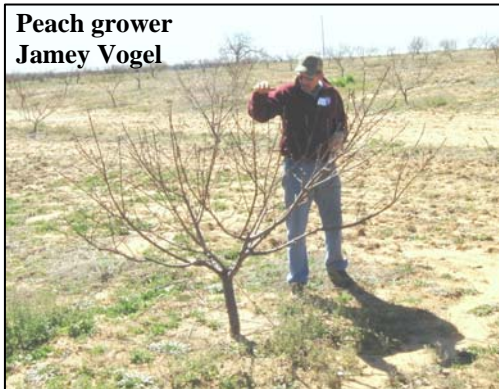
How to plant a peach tree

By Barbara Elmore

Did you know that planting a peach tree on a hilltop is a good idea if you live in Texas' Hill Country?

Peach grower Jamey Vogel of Vogel Orchards dispensed that tip and others last year in a workshop. Since this is a good time for planting peach trees, here's more advice:

1. Planting a peach tree on a hilltop offers protection that may save the fruit during a late freeze. Frost will kill peaches, and on some mornings the temperature on a hill will be 10 to 15 degrees higher.



2. Plant in full sun and far away from oak, pecan and other peach trees. Bigger trees will draw away water and nutrients. Also, plant peach trees at least 10 feet away from a concrete driveway.

3. Peaches do well in sandy soil 18 to 24 inches deep. If the topsoil is deeper than that, nutrients leach past the root zone. This means the tree will die after five or six years, or will be stunted. Peach trees will grow in clay but will need more water because heavy clay dries out quickly. If you want to plant an orchard, have your soil tested by AgriLife Extension service. Report the type of crop you want to plant and Extension will recommend what you need to add to the soil for optimal production.

4. Use root stimulator in the water before planting trees to give the roots the best chance of developing. The roots of a planted peach tree will go beyond the canopy of the tree. The ideal size tree for planting is between 24

and 36 inches.

5. Dig a hole deep enough to completely cover the tree's roots, and let the roots spread out. Cut back the lowest branches. Cover the trunk with foil about 12 inches up from the ground to prevent growth at the bottom of the tree. This also protects the trunk from herbicides. Do not use broadleaf weed killers on or around new trees because the chemicals will kill them. Mulch well.

6. For this area, get a variety that likes between 600 and 700 chilling hours. Chilling hours are the hours in winter after the first hard freeze that the temperature is below 45 degrees. Although you will not lose a crop because of a lack of chilling hours, you will have a weaker crop. Nurseries can tell you what the chilling hours are for the variety you are buying, and the AgriLife Extension service offers maps for chilling regions.

7. Peach trees do not like wet feet. Build up your ground if the planting area stays wet. Also, keep grass away from the peach trees because grass competes with the tree.

8. After planting, prune off shoots and shape the canopy. On a growing peach tree, try to open the canopy for air circulation and sunlight penetration. Sunlight helps the sugar content of the peach.

9. Peach trees are self-pollinating, which means you don't need more than one. However, no peach tree is deer-resistant, and deer can damage a young tree. So try to keep out the deer and plant more than one tree.

10. Trees will bear their first fruit at about age three. They age quickly and decline after 12 to 13 years. Some trees live to be 40 years old or older, but that's unusual.



Meet the Class of 2011



Barbara Noblin

Even though Barbara grew up in Maryland she has very deep Texas roots. Her ancestors helped settle this fine state in the 1830s. She said that she enjoys hiking, camping, and photography. Barbara's mother inspired her to garden with her beautiful vegetable and flower gardens. Barbara is on the steering committee for the *Harvest Partners* a community garden development program. Along with all of this she also works part time at Peterson Hospice as a bereavement social worker.



Tom Darnell

Tom has had an interesting career life. He spent five years as a Washington State Trooper, was a teacher, and now is a cattle rancher. He raises half Brahman and half Black Angus cattle. Originally from Seattle, Washington, Don came to Texas as fast as he could and has been here for 32 years. When he is not working his cattle, he fills his spare time with golf, photography, gardening, or reading.



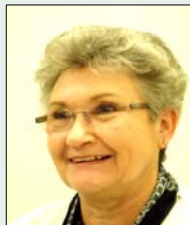
Angela Jordan

A fifth generation Texas gardener, Angela lives in Fredericksburg. She has a great interest in native plants because they save water and can survive against insects and disease. Along with gardening using native plants Angela is an organic gardener. Although she is in her garden a great deal working with the community outreach programs brings her great joy. Angela is also a mother and grandmother; she hopes to be able to teach her grandchildren to love gardening as much as she does.



Anne Hamm

Anne served 12 years in the *Air Force* as an Administrative Specialist and later a Transportation Officer as a 2nd Lieutenant. Her husband of 33 years has been by her side in the garden and came into the marriage with his own pick axe, so he has been digging her planting holes for her. Originally from Ohio, she truly loves the Texas Hill Country. She has learned a lot about gardening from the various places she has lived. Along with gardening she enjoys playing the piano and has even done a little tap dancing.



Carol Howard

An avid gardener Carol enjoys the fruits of her labor literally. She puts up all the vegetables she grows including some black eyed peas she ate on New Year's Day. Along with her vegetable garden she has a large orchard that includes apples, peaches, and pecans. She wants to pass on the joy of gardening to her grandchildren and that they can eat what they grow or grow a pumpkin they can carve at Halloween. Their big project is to put in a rain water harvesting system for the garden and orchard.



Don Walzel

Don is the second member of our organization who lives the farthest, in Rio Frio in Real County. He is involved in many organizations. He is Vice President of the *Frio Canyon Garden Club*, he has organized such events as the annual *Frio River Clean Up*, and the *Victory Garden* at Leaky ISD. Somehow, Don has found time to take his motorcycle for rides throughout the Hill Country. Don also supports the *Walk for Life* cancer walk each year.



Pat Johnson

Pat works at the *South Texas Veterans Health Care Facility* as one of the gardeners and he knows how to run a tractor. He is a graduate of the *Christian Men's Job Corps*. In his spare time he enjoys his vegetable garden and working on his landscape. He is a proud grandpa to two boys named Cameron and Jackson. When Pat can, he likes working with the elderly and helping them to garden.



ALL THINGS EDIBLE
by Pam Bresler

February is rose month, not just for Valentine's Day bouquets, but in the garden. The best time to prune your roses is around Valentine's Day. So, why is this information in a column on edibles? In the fall, rose hips can be harvested for jam, jellies and tea, as

long as the roses weren't sprayed with pesticides. When we visited our Swedish "daughter" in Goteborg, it was fun to browse grocery stores for unusual products. Noticing a package of "Rose Hip Soup," Elin explained that if she had a cold or the flu, her mother made rose hip soup because it was full of Vitamin C. When you live in Scandinavia, citrus is hard to come by, but *Rosa rugosa* with their huge hips are abundant. Roses as edible landscaping! Also, rose petals are colorful sprinkled over a green salad or fruit salad. Be sure the roses are pesticide-free and remove the white base of the petals as it is bitter.

If eating roses isn't your thing, then you can start seeds of vegetable transplants in February. Starting them about six weeks before the last frost is a good rule of thumb. I start my tomatoes in early January, my peppers in early February and squash, cucumbers and melons, mid-February. Most people direct seed the last three, but between slugs, snails and birds, I find using transplants more successful. Also, the sooner the summer squash goes in the ground, the greater the likelihood that I'll harvest squash before the squash vine borer shows up.

I start seeds in community pots and use bottom heat to get them germinated quickly. An old heating pad on low is just the right temperature. Tomatoes sprout in three days with bottom heat. If the soil is too cool, the seeds of warm-weather crops can rot. Once the seedlings have two true leaves, I prick them out into small individual pots. *Gardener's Supply* (www.gardeners.com) has an all-in-one seed starting system: 24-cell growing tray, dome, capillary mat and water reservoir for about \$15. *Burpee* (www.burpee.com) has a similar system.

Gardens Alive's "All-Roots" system has a bottomless 25-cell tray and a hydroponic system for seed starting (www.GardensAlive.com). It costs about \$25.

Once the seeds sprout and are potted, they can be grown in cooler conditions, like in a garage. You will need a strong light source, and a cheap shop light is perfect. The shop light's cool spectrum is fine for seedlings, but if you wanted to grow flowering plants, like African violets, you would need a full-spectrum bulb. You want the bulb to almost touch the foliage so the plants don't get leggy.

My light system is made with 1" I.D. PVC pipe, 2-48" fluorescent bulbs in a shop light, hanging by lightweight chains attached with an eye bolt, an extension cord and a timer.



The light system is on a table for easy access. Group plants by height and raise or lower the chains as needed. The light is on for sixteen hours.



"Big Bertha" is the best bell pepper I ever grew. The vigorous growth of foliage prevented sunscald and the peppers never stopped until a hard freeze "Juliet" is my must-have salad tomato from spring until frost. Seed catalogs can be seductive, but many of the varieties aren't suitable for our area, so shop wisely. Rather than list all the varieties of vegetable suitable for central Texas, check out this website from Travis County :

Continued, Page 10 middle column.

Hill Country Master Gardeners 2010 Executive Committee

Chris Seifert - President
Barbara Elmore - Vice President
Jackie Connelly - Secretary
Roy Eliff - Treasurer
Randy Simmons - Ex-officio Advisor
Roy Walston - C.E.A. Advisor

Committees

Archivist: Ida Luckey

Demonstration Garden:
Dorothy & David Buchen, Chairs

Education:
Debbie Russell, Chair

Greenhouse: Vicki Killeen & Anne Brown, Chairs

HCMG Office Manager:
Judy Simmons

Horticultural Inquiry: Anne Moss

Information: Betty West

Jr. Master Gardener Program:
Sandy Martin, Chair

Market Days:
Ron Smith II, Chair

Mentors: June Sher

Programs: Melva Chancellor

Public Relations: Carol Biggs

Record Keeping & Volunteer Hours: Sharon Johnson & John LaRoche

Scholarship:
Judy Fleming, Chair

Speakers Bureau: Kathy Lewis

Technology: Cindy Anderson

Volunteer Coordination - Kathleen Russell & Kathy Zeliff

Newsletter & Website
Chair & Newsletter Editor - Eleanor Baldwin

Assistant Editors - Betty West & Kathie Marlow

Columnists - Pam Bresler, Barbara Elmore, Marilyn Pease, Judy Fleming

Environmental Reporter - Bernadell Larson

Webmaster - Carol Brinkman

Web Assistants - Anne Moss & Julie Bartosh

Submissions to baldwin@ktc.com

All Things Edible continued:

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/docs/VegetableVarietiesTravisCounty2010.pdf>

By the end of the month, fruit trees should be sprayed with dormant oil. Peach and plum trees need to be pruned. For pruning instructions see:

http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/2000/mar00/h5mar00.html

Apples, pears and figs don't need pruning. The less you do to pear trees, the better. Too much TLC on pear trees can encourage Fire Blight disease.

Asparagus crowns, strawberries, artichoke plants, onions plants and other cool-weather transplants can still be planted in February. Plant seeds of kale, lettuce, spinach, beets, chard, carrots, peas, turnips and radish. Continue to control weeds and amend your soil. Spring planting will be here before you know it!



Salvia coccinea 'Summer Jewel Red', an All-America Selections® 2011 winner that should be great for gardens here in the Hill Country. Photo courtesy of All-America Selections®



Webmaster Carol Brinkman's

Websites of the Month

Maybe you missed it. On the very first day of the new year, the San Antonio Express had an article about some of the new plant selections for 2011. The tantalizing photos and descriptions of several new varieties sent me to my computer to Google for more. And, I know, we all receive plant and seed catalogs every year at this time, but you can supplement your reading and wishing by viewing even more catalogs online — and save a tree as well.

Here are a few websites to start with and each will lead you to other sites.

<http://www.all-americaelections.org/>

<http://www.provenwinners.com>

<http://www.ballhort.com/Growers/catalog.aspx>