

April, 2017
Volume 15, Issue 4

President's Message	1
Raeann Reid's Event Schedule	2
February Minutes	3
Chile's Global Warming	4
Perennial Garden Color	5
Meet the Interns and Mentors	6
Interns and Mentors cont'd	7
Interns and Mentors cont'd	8
Building an Ornamental Garden	9
Hill Country Veggies	10
Minutes cont'd & Tom Daniels	11
Master Gardeners at work	12

HCMG will meet on April 5, 2017

**Location: AgriLife
Building Classroom**

**Noon - Networking/
Open Forum**

1:00 - Meeting

2:00- Program

**"Growing Texas Native
Plants from Seed"
Chuck Jansow**



**TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION**

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identify and will strive to achieve full and equal opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.



Jackie Skinner

President

President's Message

I am the victim of an abusive relationship with my garden. Pitifully, as with many of the injured, the insecurity that would follow my severing this union trumps any resolution to end it. No matter how my garden treats me, it gives me just enough pleasure now and again to keep me coming back for more. My dwelling over romance cata-

logs displaying all the latest in blooms and foliage only reinforces the hold it has over me.

I have found the acre comprising my little bit of heaven to be incomprehensively moody. When I'm blue, I'll check on a newly installed six-pack of starter plants and discover, to my dismay, that all but two have been murdered. I'll melt into a puddle of tears, feeling completely defeated. Yet, if I'm cheerful, those two tiny survivors will thoroughly gratify me in my small victory.

When southerly zephyrs tickle me with a small sprinkling of dry falling leaves I'll giggle over the pleasurable interlude. When I'm "in a mood" the leaves fall in buckets to cover my freshly swept deck. And no matter how much I may curse Mother Nature for too much weather she uncaringly persists in "giving it to me" because as far as she is concerned, her weather is always perfect. Another lost battle.

My garden can smell self-confidence the moment I pass through the kitchen door. On my "power" days it will reward me with perky plants that fill my senses with beauty and fragrance. I'm in charge and each plant is satisfactorily performing its assigned task. But if that garden gets wind of trepidation I find myself in the midst of a team of lazy bums and there's no winning back the upper hand. Even under the threat of "Grow or go!" my green beings retaliate by sulking in a wilt, sending me scurrying back to a shelf of problem-solver books under a cloud of guilt.

I'm considering paying a visit to Trena at the Plant Haus for a prescription of gardener's Valium. Not for me, but for that vertiginous presence surrounding my house. If only I can curb its determination to kick my keester and maybe even become companionable, it and I might still find the happiness I so richly deserve. If not, I may have to run away to Savannah.

HCMG 2017, Calendar of Events

Attendance at events other than Master Gardener meetings is optional. We list events for those wishing to attend other educational offerings. We try to limit the listed events to those that would earn our members CEUs, but not all will be eligible. Be sure to call and confirm event.

March 2017 HCMG trainee classes, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00 a.m.-Noon and 12:30-3:00 p.m. Login to members section of HCMG website for complete list of class descriptions and times. Hill Country Youth Event Center. HCMGs welcome. Must pre-register on VMS.

March 28, NPSOT Fredericksburg, 6:30 p.m. social, followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Rebecca Leonard, partner and Austin office manager for the international firm, Design Workshop, will present a program on landscape architecture. Memorial Presbyterian Church. Visitors welcome.

April 4, NPSOT Boerne, 6:30 p.m. social, followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Jim Stanley, author and Master Naturalist, will present, "Native [bunch] Grasses and Health of the Hill Country." Cibolo Nature Center Auditorium. Visitors welcome.

April 5, HCMG, 12:00 p.m. general meeting, 1:00 p.m. monthly meeting. Chuck Janzow, former science teacher, self-taught horticulturist and founding member of the Boerne NPSOT chapter will present, "Growing Texas Native Plants from Seed." Hill Country Youth Event Center. HCMGs and trainees.

April 8, Cibolo Nature Center, 9:00 a.m. to noon. John Kight, engineer and rainwater catchment and solar power owner, will provide the latest technological information and practical advice on these conservation practices. Cibolo Nature Center Auditorium and John Kight's home. \$25 per person for members; \$35 per person for non-members. Preregistration is required using the link on the cibolo.org calendar.

April 11, NPSOT Kerrville, 1:30 p.m. Patty Leslie Pasztor, ethnobotanist and author, will present "Native American and Pioneer Uses of Plants." Visitors welcome.

April 12, Rose Garden Club of Medina, 10:15 a.m. Tour, luncheon and program: "Native Plants of the Hill Country. Gardens at the Ridge. Visitors welcome.

April 15, Cibolo Nature Center & Farm, 9:30 a.m. to noon. Organic Gardening 101, all the basics to grow an organic garden, \$15. Herff Farm. Preregistration is required using the link on the cibolo.org calendar.

April 15 and 22, Cibolo Nature Center & Farm, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Two-part hands-on organic gardening short course. \$30 for the course. Herff Farm. Preregistration is required using the link on the cibolo.org calendar.

April 18, Hunt Garden Club. 10:00 a.m. Peggy Sechrist, Certified Holistic Management Educator and spokesperson for "Empowering Women in Agriculture," will present, "The Role that Soil plays in Catching and Holding Water." Hunt United Methodist Church. Visitors Welcome.

April 18, Kerr County Cactus & Succulent Society, 7:00 p.m. Program to be announced, Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library. Always confirm date, time and location. Visitors welcome.

April 21, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, 12:10-12:50 p.m. Beth McMahon, AgriLife Horticulture Agent, will present "Organic Gardening Methods." See other tentative topics, cost and registration details on the HCMG website homepage. Gillespie County TAMU AgriLife Extension Office.

April 25, NPSOT Fredericksburg. 6:30 p.m. social, followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Kim Smajstrla, leader of the non-profit, "The Monarch Midwife," will present a program on three of the four main Monarch sanctuaries in the mountains of Michoacán, Mexico, where the Monarchs overwinter. Memorial Presbyterian Church. Visitors welcome.

Addresses for Events Listed Above:

Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville

Cibolo Nature Center Auditorium, 140 City Park Road, Boerne

Gardens at the Ridge, 13439 North Ranch Road 783, Kerrville

Gillespie County TAMU AgriLife Extension Office, 95 Frederick Road, Fredericksburg

Herff Farm, 33 Herff Road, Boerne

Hill Country Youth Event Center, 3785 Highway 27, Kerrville

Hunt United Methodist Church, 120 Merritt Road, Hunt
Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 North Milam Street, Fredericksburg

Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street, Kerrville

Hill Country Master Gardeners Monthly Program and Business Meeting March 1, 2017

The Monthly business meetings was held at the Hill County Youth Event Center classroom.

64 members were present.

President, Jackie Skinner, called the meeting to order at 1 pm. Wil Rolfe led the members with the Pledge of Allegiance. Patty Zohlen gave the invocation.

Quorum was verified.

The minutes of the February meeting were approved. Debra Foley moved to accept the minutes, Anne Brown seconded and the motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Jackie Connelly provided the February Treasurer's Report which was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Open CEU Meetings: It was suggested that we open CEU meetings to the public without charge. However, there may be a requirement by AgriLife to charge the participants not in the MG program. Caryl Hartman moved to accept the proposal to offer CEU programs at no charge, Kathy Lewis seconded and the issue was open for discussion. After much discussion it was decided that further discussion with Roy Walston would be necessary to clear up on-going ambiguities. Patty Zohlen moved to table the issue, Jan Grimes seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to table the issue for now.

Badges: Jackie Skinner informed the membership that the cost of name badges would total more than \$1,000 and that it would be up to the membership to approve the new estimate on the cost of the badges. After brief discussion Anne Brown moved to have the issue tabled until membership could see the sample badges again. Melayne Arnold seconded the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed CEU program for August monthly meeting: The "Bulbs for all Seasons" program would need to be 1-1/2 hours long to fully cover the subject presented by David Will. Kathleen Guenther motioned to accept

the additional time needed for the program, Debra Rosario seconded. It was suggested that we start the program at 1:00 to accommodate the program and maybe even a half hour early. The idea was voted on and accepted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kerr County Juvenile Probation Center

Project: Frank Dunlap is needing someone to take over the Kerr County Juvenile Probation Center Project & begin work soon. He suggested that with a lack of good soil that possibly raised beds be used for the project.

Seed Packets: Jackie Connelly announced that March 9th at 9:30 will be the day for volunteers to come make the free seed packets that we give away at our various programs.

Blooms and Barrels:

1. Volunteers needed:

- Patty Zohlen needs volunteers to help with the children's activities
- Carol Hagemeyer is looking for help with the Children's Activity Master Gardener booth
- Demo Garden is planning a 10:00 garden tour for B & B guests; help needed
- Sue Hall is looking for greeters, giving directions, counting guests, helping with wagons
- HCMG Information booth needs 2 people to man the booth until 11:30 and then an additional 2 more volunteers for the afternoon.

f. Hospitality: looking for 3 people to help with serving and cooking food for B & B

2. Plants: Sandy Lewis, Anne Brown, and Janice Walker purchased 1500 plants for the sale. Wagons will be needed for transporting plants and for guests to use during the sale.

3. Programs: Jackie Connelly worked on a beautiful poster design for the B & B sale. There will be 5 free programs at the sale: Duane Robinson will be presenting Texas Superstar Plants, Anne Brown will demon-

strate rain water harvesting and help with rain barrel sales and procurement, Lydia Jones will be conducting a class on vegetable gardening, Connie Townsend will conduct a class on raising tomatoes, Barb Banks will be conducting a class on insects.

4. Publicity: Dee Dunton has taken on the duties for publicity for the B & B sale.

5. Signage: Melayne Arnold and Jackie Connelly will be in charge of the B & B signage.

6. Rain Barrels: Rain barrel making day will be at the end of March. Volunteers will be needed to clean up about 45 to 50 barrels—sign up on VMS.

7. Preparation Days:

- April 6 will be Spa day
- April 7th will be moving day for the plants
- Saturday April 8 will be Sale Day.

Logo Wear: Becky Northcutt will be ordering aprons, hats, and shirts with the Master Gardener logo in 2 weeks—about the middle of March.

Research Desk: It has been decided that there will be a "research desk" core group of "trainers" who will be assisting our new interns learn the ropes of research desk

duties for the first hour of their initial training, the mentors will then take over the rest of the training for the mentees. After the Interns complete their research desk hours, there will also be regular phone hours kept on Tuesday's that will be manned by someone on the "research desk" committee and volunteers so that we always have someone available for the public to have questions answered.

Texas State Master Gardener's Quarterly Directors' report:

Duane Robinson, director, attended the meeting in College Station on February 11. Jayla Fry spoke about the VMS. HCMGs has been one of the first and lead groups to use the VMS (Volunteer Management System). Officers were installed as follows: Peggy Rogers, President; Mickie Wallace,



CHILES' GLOBAL WARMING

By Dennis Strauch

As Spring arrives, vegetable gardeners' thoughts turn to planning and planting the garden. In that planning, peppers play an important role. Can you

imagine a world without salsa or tabasco or sriracha?

The cuisines of numerous countries would be radically different from what they are today if chiles hadn't returned across the ocean with Christopher Columbus. Barely 50 years after the discovery of the New World, chiles were warming the tummies of the Old World. How did they spread so far, so fast?

To understand the phenomenon, we need a bit of history (no groans, please). The pepper saga begins in the first millennium BCE with the career of another pepper – black pepper. Although it was first grown on the Malabar Coast in India, the taste for it in the ancient world was very high, no matter the cost.

The global system of trade, the sea and land routes throughout the known world that spread culture and cuisine, was engaged with the appetite for black pepper. Not surprisingly, vast wealth came from the control of access to black pepper. India held the secrets of its cultivation and was the sole supplier. Silk Road trading routes throughout China and the Middle East were the primary delivery sources.

The decline of the Mongol Empire, which had protected the Silk Road, fractured the great trading partnerships and led to warring factions implementing embargoes along the land routes. The Ottoman Muslims controlled choke points along the land and sea routes and levied punishing taxes on goods moving through. This made the land routes unaffordably expensive and forced Europe to look for a new sea route if it was to have black pepper.

The choices for a new sea route were perilous. You could sail around the African continent into the Indian Ocean, or you could sail west across the uncharted Atlantic Ocean in hopes of reaching India from that side.

As we all know, Columbus took the route across the Atlantic and arrived in the Caribbean in 1492. He did not find the black pepper he was seeking, but by New Year's Day, 1493, he found the capsicum pepper that is now familiar to us. Although Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain were not impressed by the introduction to this new pepper, the peppers proved a popular product in an increasingly fast moving world trading network. The fruits of the capsicum pepper contain the chemical capsaicin that gives the "bite", warms the body and releases brain endorphins in response to the burn.

Columbus stopped in the Portuguese-controlled Azore Islands before returning to Spain on his first voyage from the New World. Apparently, capsicum seeds were shared with the Portuguese who then spread them far and wide as they travelled the trade routes that they established in the East, Africa and then India. Within just a few years, capsicum peppers were in pots and onto plates all over the Old World.

Aside from intentional planting, natural dispersal by birds spread capsicum peppers far and wide. Throughout the Middle East, China and Africa, many cultures that had survived on rice or grain diets thrived with the addition of peppers. Perhaps no culinary advance since the invention of distilling has had more effect than the propagation of chili peppers.



Poblanos, Serranos, Jalepenos

So, as our gardens receive this year's planting of jalapeños, cayennes, poblanos, and serranos, let's remember the interesting and glorious

history of one of our favorite garden gems.

* Credit to Saudi Aramco World for much of the historical information presented in this article.

Perennial Garden Color by Dr. William C. Welch



Dr. William Welch is greeted by Education Committee members Debra Foley (left) and Terri DeBusk (right). Dr. Welch is a nationally-recognized professor and landscape horticulturalist with Texas A&M and Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Before a room filled with students and certified HCMG, Dr. Welch offered a program on perennials suitable for Hill County Gardens.

As a best-selling author, Dr. Welch's numerous books were quickly snatched up by eager gardeners.

Left to right: Mrs. Lucille Welch helps students Terry Lashley, Shirley Smith, Jim Wilhite and Judy Beauford with their selections.



Photo Credit:
Vickie Killeen

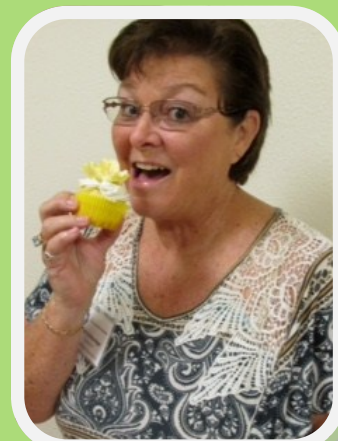


Left to right:
Brenda Heinsohn, Christine Snyder and Patti Schlessiger wait their turn as Dr. Welch autographs Anne Brown's book. In the background, Amanda Sutton prepares for the next lecture.



Name that perennial! Cake decorator extraordinaire, Lydia Jones, outdid herself with these delicious beauties.

"Yum." says student Patti Schlessiger. "Who knew perennials tasted so good."



Meet the 2017 Interns and their Mentors

Stanley Zwinggi, of Fredericksburg, will soon retire from PIC Business Systems, Inc., a San Antonio company involved with computer software development and applications. His special interests include computers, software, printers, and public speaking. His gardening interests focus on vegetables and fruit trees, with interests in soils, grasses, and nutrition for cattle and game animals. His motivations for joining Hill Country Master Gardeners include learning more about gardening and to become more involved in community service. We are pleased that Stanley is joining us and we look forward to his involvement.



Carl Luckenbach, of Fredericksburg, TX, completed Master Gardener training in 2012, after retiring from 34 years of commercial property and casualty insurance and 10 years of military service before that. Carl serves the Hill Country Master Gardeners as Chair of the Scholarship Committee. His principal service projects include The Pioneer Museum/Gillespie County Historical Society and St. Barnabas Episcopal Church. Carl has many interests and involvements including the Rotary Youth Exchange Program, Hill Country Master Naturalists, the Gillespie County A&M Club, St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, American Legion Post 244, and eight grand children.

Chris Scruggs is a resident of Kerrville, TX. He has been doing gardening in the Texas Hill country off and on over the past seven years. He is taking the Master Gardener program to become further educated in how to grow in the Texas Hill Country.

Duane Robinson moved to Kerr county the summer of 2016. He transferred his Master Gardener from Walker county. He completed the MG training in 2008 and continued specialist training in plant propagation, greenhouse management, composting, landscape design Consultant, Irrigation Efficiency, Home Fruit & Native Trees, and Texas Superstar. Currently he is studying to become a certified Herbalist through Rosemary Gladstar's online course.



Travis Pflughaupt is a resident of Kerrville, TX. He graduated from Schreiner University in 2014 and is a third generation farmer who is interested in growing in his knowledge on how to grow plants in an oven that is known for growing rocks!

Mike Weberpal & his wife Michelle have lived in Fredericksburg for the past 12 years. He spent 26 years in the Legal Dept. of Halliburton Company and had assignments in Dallas, London, Houston and Singapore. He and Jim have discovered that they have several mutual acquaintances. He took early retirement in 2007 and became the President of the Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce. He returned to corporate life for 7 years as General Counsel of Universal Weather & Aviation and retired two years ago. He is member of Rotary and serves on the Boards of the Community Foundation of the Texas Hill Country and Gillespie County Historical Society. He is a graduate of the 2016 HCMG class and is a member of the Education Committee. He is trying to use more native plants in his flower beds and also has a small vegetable garden.



Jim Wilhite and his wife Pam moved to Fredericksburg two years ago. Jim was the Director of Global Human Resources at Baker Hughes, Inc. in Houston, Texas and worked in the oil and gas industry for 40 years. He is a graduate of the University of Texas. He is a former member of the Houston Rose Society and currently volunteers with other Master Gardeners at the Good Samaritan Clinic and the Biblical Gardens at the Fredericksburg United Methodist Church. He and Pam are members of the Gillespie County Historical Society, the Pedernales Creative Arts Alliance and four choral groups in Fredericksburg.

Judy Beauford lives in Boerne and has been gardening there for 40 plus years. She is a retired university professor of mathematics at the University of the Incarnate Word where she taught statistics to doctoral students. Her research areas were early childhood mathematics and the integration of mathematics and science. Judy is a volunteer co-manager of the Mission Garden for the Hill Country Mission for Health in Boerne. Her interests include organic gardening, quilting, geology, and her granddaughter. Judy's love of teaching and sharing will be a great asset to our group and the community.



Debbie Bacon grew up in Wisconsin, but moved to Texas "as fast as she could" (1977). She retired as a regional sales manager for a food manufacturer based in Fresno, California. Debbie's love of gardening comes from her parents who were avid vegetable and flower gardeners. She has been a Master Gardener since 2014 and is also a member of the

Kerrville Garden Club. This is her second year of mentoring a student. Debbie also mentors other widows who's husband's were Vietnam veterans and died from brain cancer linked to Agent Orange. She has lived in Center Point since 2009.

Cindy Anderson moved to Kerrville from D/FW in 2006, retiring from 30 years in publishing and graphic arts at EDS. She joined HCMG in 2008 and has worked (and played) in the HCMG Demonstration Garden ever since, helping to make it both beautiful and educational. She also makes signs, banners, and brochures for HCMG as needed. She and husband Bill have one son and a precious little red-haired grandson. Cindy believes that gardeners make the best friends of all, and she is grateful for all of her "best friends" made through HCMG.



Chris Snyder retired from a 45 year career as a nurse. She has a lot more time to spend developing other passions like gardening and horseback riding. She's enjoyed "diddling in the dirt" for years, but through the MG program has gained an even better appreciation and understanding of our amazing Mother Nature. Born & raised in Ohio, she traveled around the world with her Air Force husband. Everywhere they went, she would have to learn how to garden all over again. She found the principles do not change, but the rules certainly do depending on the soil, climate, local plants, etc. What an eye opener! Even in the Hill country the challenges are ever-changing, but always interesting and fun.

Amanda Sutton has lived in the Hill Country most of her life and grew up helping in the family vegetable garden. After graduating from Center Point High School she served four years in the US Army where she became a certified combat medical technician. After leaving the Army she came back home to Texas and then earned her LVN. She now readily admits that nursing is not what she wants to do. Presently she is manager of a convenience store in Fredericksburg. Fitting in HCMG classes has been a challenge, but it is a challenge she is determined to overcome. When not working, she likes to read and try new recipes. But, most of all, she wants to learn more about gardening.



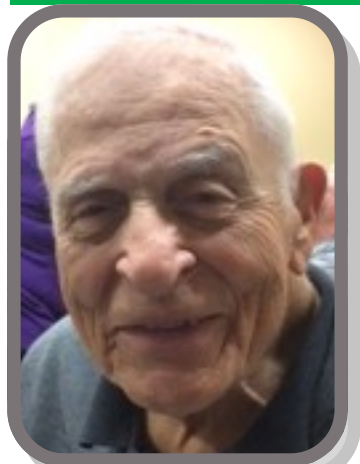
Carol Brinkman has been a HGMC since 2007. She designed our website and was webmaster until October of 2015. Carol says, "I have gardening in my genes and always dirt on my jeans." She grew up in a small town in Oklahoma with both her mother and grandmother teaching her the joys of gardening – especially flower gardening and, more especially, bearded iris gardening. Upon graduation from the University of Oklahoma, she moved to Houston to

teach, and there she met her husband Harvey. She says, "He is my enabler when it comes to gardening. Over the years he has stood by, and more often, joined in as I eliminated every blade of grass in our large yard to make more flower beds."

Patti Schlessiger lives in Center Point, and was the Secretary at the Extension office for 6 years. She loves gardening and is excited to be able to take the MG class and become an active Certified Master Gardener. She also enjoys photography and public speaking.



Anne Brown has been a Master Gardener since 2005. She has served in several capacities during that time, including President and Chairman of the State Convention. She works on the demo garden committee, the horticultural inquiry committee, the greenhouse committee, and manages the rain barrel project. Anne has specialties in Rainwater Harvesting, Oak Wilt, Greenhouse Management, Plant Propagation, Citrus Greening, Irrigation Efficiency and probably something else. Anne also does the home visits.



Bob O'Connor

BUILDING AN ORNAMENTAL GARDEN

MID-PROJECT RELECTIONS (PART 1)

By Bob O'Connor

Introduction: One year ago I submitted my first article on Building an Ornamental Garden in the Texas Hill Country and have enjoyed very much writing about the project during the ensuing period. This month and next, however, instead of selecting another design or construction detail to present, I want to reflect on how my thinking about the garden as a whole has evolved and where it is today. Most of the effort so far has gone as planned, except that rate of progress has been much slower than anticipated. This was, in the beginning, due to not finding competent and reliable assistance for its construction. That problem has now been resolved and physical progress has picked up considerably.

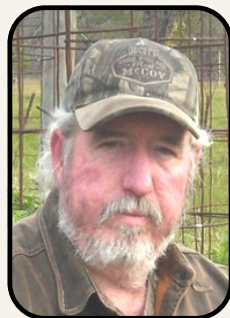
Our Original Objectives: Basically, the statement of Edith's and my original objectives has not changed; namely, to build an ornamental garden that reflects the austere beauty of the Texas Hill Country, that utilizes native or adapted plants, that minimizes water usage, that minimizes physical maintenance, that excludes deer and is wheelchair accessible. What has changed, however, is the depth of my understanding of an ornamental garden as a living entity and what that implies. Before entering this discussion, let me summarize physical progress to-date.

Physical Progress To-Date: Except for the glazing and tiling of the Conservatory, the building of two smart cold frames and the finishing of the irrigation system, the hardscape construction has, essentially, been completed. What remains is the development and implementation of a sustainable horticulture.

A House of Many Mansions: I can express the evolution of my thinking quite simply as an increase in appreciation of our garden as a living organism. Building an ornamental garden is much like birthing a child to whose welfare one is committed for life. A garden is the transition space between one's home and the outside world. A garden is a three dimensional, volume whose vertical dimension is delimited by the soil below and the tree canopy above and whose horizontal extent is contained within its perimeter walls and the house. A garden is space laterally and vertically divided into trophic layers of flora and fauna, micro regions of shade and light, of color and scent, of dryness and moisture, of coolness and warmth and, temporally, into periods of song and buzzing, of fluttering and quiet. A garden is a thing of beauty that can be enjoyed aesthetically from afar, as with a painting, or a living, pulsing vessel into which one can totally immerse oneself. Transitionally connected, the Patio, a part of the garden, can be thought of as a room of the house, and the Conservatory, a part the house, as an extension of the garden. A garden is a house of many mansions, an incubator of life that, unlike an architectural edifice, is never completed, continuing long after the last stone has been laid, ever living and always evolving.

Garden, Biodiversity and a Climate-Changing World: Next month I want to continue these reflections on an ornamental garden as it relates to biodiversity and a climate-changing world.





Hill Country Veggies

April 2017

By Allen Mace

Quick disclaimer this month. Just

got back from a trip to southwestern Oklahoma and I noticed that the Mesquite trees, a few hundred miles north, are starting to kick out their leaves, mine are already out. I also saw Indian Paint Brushes between Hico and Hamilton Texas, and Bluebonnets just south of Marble Falls. All this tells me that winter is, most likely, finished with us. I will be planting my vegetables within the next week or two BUT, I will keep something handy to cover the plants just in case. March 20th is my average last freeze date but the thunder last January is still in the back of my mind.



Figure 1: Front Panel

Every year I dance around with whether or not to use chemical or organic fertilizers. This year I'm going to try to incorporate a boost of chemical fertilizer every two or three weeks. Here's where a calendar comes into play. After the garden is planted, write a fertilizing schedule on your calendar. Map out the next few months and keep up with the dates. Some

years I like to keep track of when it rains and how much. A good rain a day or two before a scheduled fertilizer day and maybe I don't fertilize as much. If the plants look good, maybe I can skip fertilizing that scheduled day and hit them good the next time. Now comes the fun part, what do I fertilize with?

When I look at a container of fertilizer at the store, I always turn it around a few times, look at all the number on the back and wonder what it all means. Most people look at the picture on the front and think whatever the picture is, that's what it's for. The true mystery lies on the analysis panel. That's where the numbers come into play. The first thing you notice are three larger or bold numbers at the top of the analysis panel. One might be 15-30-15, another might say 18-18-21, or 24-8-16, these numbers represent a ratio. The first number is the percentage of Nitrogen. The second number tells you the percentage of Phosphorus and the third is the percentage of Potassium. These are the three most important elements in the fertilizer package. All the rest of the elements listed are important as well, but most of us are only interested in the Big Three. The number is just a percentage of the element, on a per hundred pound basis. That means with an 18-18-21 ratio, you will be getting 18 pounds of Nitrogen, 18 pounds Phosphorus, and 21 pounds of Potassium in a

For All Vegetables:

Miracle-Gro® Water Soluble Tomato Plant Food is great for use on all types of vegetables. When started, wet the seedbed but don't soak it. Once seedlings are well established, feed at normal recommendation.

Miracle-Gro® Water Soluble Tomato Plant Food 18-18-21		F 1198	
GUARANTEED ANALYSIS			
Total Nitrogen (N)	18%	Manganese (Mn)	0.05%
14% Ammoniacal Nitrogen		0.05% Chelated Manganese (Mn)	
14.0% Urea Nitrogen		Zinc (Zn)	0.05%
2.0% Nitrate Nitrogen		0.05% Water Soluble Zinc (Zn)	
Available Phosphate (P ₂ O ₅)	18%		
Soluble Potash (K ₂ O)	21%		
Magnesium (Mg)	0.50%		
0.50% Water Soluble Magnesium (Mg)			
Copper (Cu)	0.05%		
0.05% Water Soluble Copper (Cu)			
Iron (Fe)	0.10%		
0.10% Chelated Iron (Fe)			

Derived from Ammonium Sulfate, Potassium Nitrate, Urea, Potassium Phosphate, Magnesium Sulfate, Copper Sulfate, Iron EDTA, Manganese EDTA, and Zinc Sulfate.

Information regarding the contents and levels of metals in this product is available on the Internet at <http://www.regulatory-info-sc.com>

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN / MANTENER FUERA DEL ALCANCE DE LOS NIÑOS

©2013 Scotts Miracle-Gro® Water Rights
Guaranteed by Scotts Miracle Products, Inc.
14111 Scottsville, Maryland, OH

Figure 2: Analysis Panel

one hundred pound bag of this fertilizer. Don't let the numbers be confusing. By knowing what the Big Three numbers represent, we can determine which fertilizer to use and when.

Most people just pick one and use it throughout the growing season. Just a quick review of what these elements do.

Nitrogen helps to grow out the plant.

Phosphorus

aids in the production of flowers and fruit. Potassium helps in the processing of nutrients, thus improving the quality of the fruit and increasing overall plant health. By knowing where your plants are in the growth cycle and knowing which element it needs in that cycle, we should be able to influence the health and vigor of our plants as well as increase the quantity and quality of the fruits and vegetables they produce.



Figure 3: Side Panel

Minutes continued from page 3

Vice President. The State Master Gardener cruise is full but the awards will be at the Moody Ballroom after the cruise has ended; price will be \$45 and will last about 3 hours. The 2018 Conference at College Station will be in conjunction with the 40th anniversary and opening of the MG program. The 2019 Conference will be held in Victoria, Texas.

Tom Daniels Elementary School: Patty Zohlen will be conducting 5 classes with Tom Daniels school children. They will be learning about plant biology and making chia pets. She will be needing volunteers to help the children sing songs and assembling the chia pets.

Bennett Land Trust Conference: Pam Umstead spoke about the Bennett Land Trust Conference which will be held April

20th and will focus on land conservation ideas.

UGRA Project Update: Pam Umstead spoke about the UGRA project as being a program that will be quick and very visible project showcasing the work of Master Gardeners to the community.

Mentor/Mentee Photos for the Newsletter: Pat Wolters would like to take pictures and highlight each group of mentor/mentees for the newsletter. She will be at most of the intern classes taking pictures.

Potluck Lunch for April General Meeting: Linda Proffitt has set up the April 5th General membership meeting as a "potluck" luncheon to meet and greet the new intern/members of the Master Gardener' program.

Today's CEU program & program for April:

Raeann Reid has set up Molly Keck's Integrated Pest Management program for today's CEU. Chuck Janzow will be conducting next months program on Growing Texas Natives from Seed at 2:00, the meeting will be held at 1:00.

Glory Garden Guests:

Lala Flores and Elia Torres attended our Monthly meeting and CEU program—guests of Chris Seifert from the Glory Community Garden group.

ADJOURNMENT 2:00 pm.

PROGRAM: Molly Keck, Integrated Pest Management information
Hours Earned: 1 hour Monthly meeting, 1 hour CEU

Respectfully submitted,
Lydia Jones, Secretary

HCMG at Tom Daniels Elementary School

HCMG participated in the Tom Daniels Elementary Science Expo last Friday by teaching fourth grade students about plant parts and plant needs. The students made "Plant People" to take home to grow using their new knowledge about how to successfully care for plants.

**Photo
Credit:
Jim Latham**



The HCMG volunteers are Anne Brown and Jackie Skinner facing the camera and Bernadell Larson and Sandy Martin behind them. Other HCMG volunteers who participated were Jim Latham, Janice Walker, Debra Bass, and Patty Zohlen.

Hill Country Master Gardeners 2017

Executive Committee

Jackie Skinner
President

Wil Rolfe
Vice President

Lydia Jones
Secretary

Jackie Connelly
Treasurer

Debra Rosario
Ex-officio Advisor

Roy Walston
C.E.A. Advisor

Committees & Project Coordinators are listed on our website

Newsletter & Website

Newsletter Editor
Pat Wolters

Event Page Editor
Raeann Reid

Columnists
Barbara Banks, Barbara Elmore, Caryl Hartman, Allen Mace, Allen Noah, & Bob O'Connor

Photographers -
Barbara Hunter
Jim Latham

Webmaster - Debra Rosario
Web Assistant -
Diane Boerner

Submissions to
patwolters2865@hotmail.com

or **New email**

Newsletter.editor.hcmg@gmail.com

Master Gardeners involved in many spring projects

Glory Community Garden Composting Day



Photo credit:
Lydia Jones



Seed Packets



Photo credit:
Jackie Connelly

From left: Melayne Arnold, Becky Northcutt, Liz Althaus, Jan Sewell, Cindy Anderson, Diane Sellers, Anne Brown.

How many HCMGs does it take to fill 2500+ seed packets in 4 hours? There were some serious plant discussions going on while making over 2500 little seed packets to hand out at our upcoming booths. Many HCMGs (and soon to be) spent several hours folding the packets that others filled and labeled.

Greenhouse

Sandy Lewis

Bernadell Larson

Melayne Arnold



Photo credit:
Jim Latham

