

December 2021

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**HCMG
December 1, 2021**

**Christmas Party & Meeting
In-person ONLY
Riverhill Country
Club**

**11:30 am
Meal served at noon**

**1:00 pm
Meeting and
Awards Presentations**



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity".

President's Message

Hi Everyone,

Thanks for a fun and successful HCMG year.

We had the most successful Blooms and Barrels sale to date. I can't say it was the most fun because we did not get to educate and interact with the folks that came due to the pent up demand caused by THE FREEZE. As y'all know, we bought 800 plants in January when the nurseries were all running smoothly. February changed all that and the scramble began. A special thanks to Fernando Gonzalez who made lots of extra trips in search of plants for us. WE sold all 1600 of our beautiful plants in 1 and 1/2 crazy hours! A special shout out to Sandy and A.A. Martin who delivered 200 gallons of water to us during the freeze (the pumps we have to pump our water were obviously on a different electric line than the 2 green-houses).

Then we all had the challenge of restoring all the gardens we tend to their former state. I've already recognized all the Coordinators in a previous letter, but thanks again for all your hard work.

As Covid began to settle down, we began to have in person meetings and social hours so we could visit with all the MGs we had been seeing and talking to behind masks. What fun to see everyone again and have time to visit. Everything seemed to be going back to mostly normal status when Covid 2 hit us. This time, instead of going under A&M (school) rules, Agrilife was allowed to set their own guidelines following county guides thus we were able to continue most of our normal activities.

The summer brought rain and the plants that had survived the freeze came back stronger than ever. Who knew that the freeze would stimulate our plants to outperform themselves?



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Texas Fall Colors

1. **Container flowers on Gruene main street**
2. **Fall Aster blooming at Hot Wells Park in San Antonio**
3. **Plants on porch at The Ridge in Kerrville**



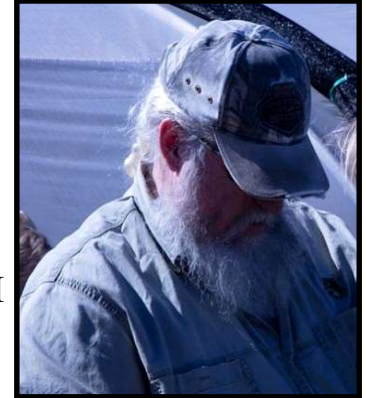
Photo Credit: Pat Wolters



Hill Country Veggies

By Allen Mace, MG

I have certainly enjoyed the cooler weather lately. The recent rains have been great, (note to self: will probably have to mow the lawn soon). This has me refreshing some of my grow bags. I've used them the last few years and it's time to reboot the soil. I originally used potting soil mixed with composted manure in these bags. After a few years, the soil needs some help.



Old Soil



Additives



Fertilizer

Step 1

Empty about half the grow bag into a wheel barrow then dump the other half someplace out of the way to be used later.

Step 2

Add new potting soil on top of the old soil in the wheel barrow, then mix.

Step 3

Add some Perlite, Vermiculite or Peat Moss, Composted Manure and some slow released fertilizer.

Step 4

Mix all components thoroughly.

Step 5

Refill grow bags or pots, leaving room for mulch. Now you're ready to plant your seedlings. Don't add mulch just yet. I like to let the plants get established before adding mulch. Even though it is cooler, don't forget to check your seedlings and keep the soil moist.

Update from last month: It appears that the deer and rabbits have joined forces with the local rock squirrels forming a trilateral alliance. This season just got interesting.



Perlite



New Soil

Education Committee Working Hard to Prepare for Hill Country Master Gardener Class of 2022

Clockwise from left: Beth McMahon, Nina Wagner, Connie Townsend, Rachel Garrison, Sandy Martin, Fernando Gonzalez, Janice Walker, Deb Bass, Diane McMahon, Donna Bellis, Jackie Connelly, and Lola Auger.

Photo Credit: Pat Wolters



President's Message continued from page 1



New HCMG Officers for 2022: Patti Schlessiger-Vice President, Dave Kinneberg -President, Rita Aliperto-Secretary and, Rachel Garrison-Treasurer (not shown)

The trees weren't so lucky, many home visits happened. I don't know how many times I said to leave the trees alone until the next spring. It will be interesting to see how they come out next year.

Speaking of next year, what a great group of officers you have elected. Dave, Patti, Rachel and Rita will do a wonderful job. Dave and Rita were graduates in 2020, and you know what a challenge that was from not being able to finish in person classes to getting through the research desk to working on projects in a shut down mode. They are well able to accept the challenge of leadership. Patti certified as a MG in 2017 after her retirement from the Extension office, and Rachel was in the 2017 class and has been President for two years.

So, once again, thanks to all the great MGs who continue to support our organization and I look forward to the January meeting on the fifth at 12:30 at the Dietert Center, being able to sit in the audience and not worry about details!

Photo Credit: Anne Brown

Sweet potato: A Soil Conserving Root Tuber Crop

Taken from an article by Rani G. Kumar, Girish K. Panicker* and Franklin O. Chukwuma at Alcorn State University

Definition: Sweet Potato (*Ipomoea batatas*,) a native of Central and South America, belongs to the Convolvulaceae (morning glory) family. It is a drought resistant, herbaceous, perennial trailing vine and considered one of the first vegetables known to mankind. This tender, tuberous, underground vegetable is considered the seventh prominent food crop in the world.

Purposes:

- To conserve soil and water through the use of vegetation
- To maintain and /or improve soil availability, quality, and soil nutrients
- To suppress weeds, reduce insect pests and diseases, and increase crop yield
- To improve soil tilth, soil organic matter, and soil structure

Planting: The popular types of sweet potatoes, commonly grown in America are Jewel, Oriental or Japanese and Hanna. Preformed ridges (6 to 9 inches high) in a full-sun area are necessary for planting slips (rooted cuttings) from mid-May to late June. Being a warm season crop, cultivars mainly are sensitive to frost and water logging. Planting to harvest will take 120 to 150 days (4 to 5 months.) Moderate irrigation for a week after transplanting will ensure plant establishment and root development. Stop watering a month before harvest for maintaining root protection and higher yields.

Cover Crops are grown for their exceptional capabilities to safeguard and improve soil quality. Residues of cover crop offer nutrients and soil fertility to the succeeding crop. Raising cover crops like winter rye, clover and buckwheat before planting sweet potatoes will support farm sustainability. They enrich the soil by minimizing soil erosion, conserving soil moisture, maintaining organic-matter content and building beneficial arthropods, suppressing weed growth and ensuring better yields. At the same time, careful preparation, suitable variety selection and careful management are needed for receiving positive results from the cover crops.

Editor's note: I grew sweet potatoes as a cover crop but I hope that I will also be harvesting some potatoes. You can see there are no weeds but the vines are trying to take over my green house. I will turn the vines into the soil after harvesting the potatoes. I need to harvest before the first frost to assure better quality potatoes.



The Grace Center of Fredericksburg

This year's charitable donation for the Hill Country Master Gardeners

The goal for the Grace Center of Fredericksburg is to raise the funds necessary to build a shelter where those who have been impacted by domestic violence can seek shelter from their abuser



According to Statistics

1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have been victims of severe physical violence (e.g. beating, burning, strangling) by an intimate partner in their lifetime.

1 in 15 children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence.

Between 21-60% of victims of intimate partner violence lose their jobs due to reasons stemming from the abuse.

72% of all murder-suicides involve an intimate partner; 94% of the victims of these murder suicides are female.

Source: <https://ncadv.org/statistics>

Please bring your \$ donation to the Christmas Party

**HCMG Monthly Meeting
November 3, 2021
Hill Country Youth Event Center**

**Call to Order (Please silence your cell phones)
Pledge of Allegiance
Invocation
Quorum verified by Anne Brown**

Committee Reports

Treasurer's Report-Approved- Anne Brown mentioned that rain barrel sales are brisk again this month and that there were only a few disbursements. Printed Treasure Reports were available at sign in desk and are also available on VMS

October 6, 2021 meeting minutes- approved- Melayne Arnold moved, Janell Dahms seconded

B&B Report- Janell Dahms-Janell asked everyone to reserve April 7 for Spa Day, April 8 for Move Day and April 9 as the day of the big sale.



Education – Donna Bellis announced that the class of 2022 already has 29 students signed up and the class limit is 30. She needs lots of facilitators and passed around a signup tablet. She will pair new facilitators with experienced facilitators. She said the first four classes will be in Fredericksburg because HCYEC is unavailable. Because Fredericksburg is in a new building she said there will be a training session December 2, 2021 from 1pm-3pm to get familiar with the classroom and AV equipment. There will also be a general facilitator class in Kerrville February 3, 2022 at 1 pm. She assured the 2020 class students that classes missed due to the 2020 COVID lockdown

would be available for audit with the 2020 students having priority over open seats.

Mentors- Rachel Garrison circulated a clipboard for mentor signups. She said she will need a lot of mentors due to large size of the class. She asks anyone interested in mentoring to sign up on the clipboard and list their county of residence as she is planning to pair up mentors and students geographically. She also said she is hoping mentors will mentor for the full year and not just during the course. She pointed out a synopsis of mentor duties.

Membership-Liz Althaus- Liz distributed the paperwork to those in attendance that need the Background screening this year. Those people with Concealed carry license will have to continue to fill out the paperwork, but this year we will have to pay the \$10 fee for them. It is no longer free.

Demo Garden- Jackie Skinner let the membership know that the demo garden is getting ready for winter and would have leaves intentionally left on the ground and that the dying turf grass is dying intentionally to pave the way for new turf. She announced a work day at the end of March to clean out the winter refuse and to haul and spread mulch and compost to present a beautiful demo garden for the B&B sale.

Unfinished Business

Election of Officers-Patty Zohlen moved and Melayne Arnold seconded the motion and the membership voted Dave Kinneberg as president, Patti Schlessiger as Vice President, Rachel Garrison as Treasurer and Rita Aliperto as Secretary for 2022

Volunteer of the Year –Anne Brown reported that no nominations have come in for Volunteer of the Year. Nominations are due by November 15, 2021 accompanied by a brief description supporting the nomination.

Continued on page 8

Christmas

Meeting-Linda Proffitt reminded the group that the Christmas meeting will be at Riverhill Country Club December 1, 2021. The facility will open at 11:30 and lunch will begin serving at 12:00. She said there will be a cash bar. Members and guests need to send \$20.00 per person to the Treasurer by November 15, 2021 to reserve a place.



Charity for This Year-Anne Brown announced the Charity for 2021 will be The Grace Center in Fredericksburg, as recommended by Linda Proffitt. The Grace Center is a new family and pet shelter and groundbreaking is this month. Initially only monetary donations are being accepted. Furnishings will be accepted when the building is ready to open. Bring donations to the Christmas Party or place in Treasurers box in the office before December 1st.

New Business

Resignations-Anne Brown announced a vacancy in position of Publicity Chair. Tina Woods has resigned. Shannon Barker asked if there's a job description, Anne said yes, and a media book with addresses and timelines is available. Duane Robinson has also resigned from both his state position and local positions.

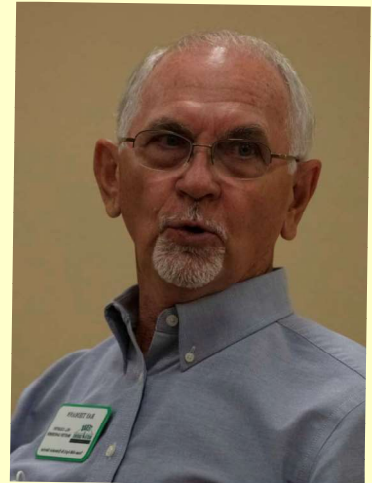
Doyle Center Donations- Anne Brown relayed Angela Fiedler's request for help with the 4H Thanksgiving dinner project for Doyle Community Center. 4H is providing a Thanksgiving dinner and needs NON perishable items, including instant potatoes, instant stuffing, instant gravy, canned

goods, etc.

Donations are being accepted at the Agrilife Office from Oct 14-November 8.

Public Programs-

Ray Tiemann announced that the Public Programs project will be Restarting the spring of 2022.



December Business Meeting

December 1, 2021

Riverhill Country Club, 100 River Hill Club, Kerrville

Adjournment

Submitted by
Donna Nutt
HCMG Secretary
11/18/2021



Cindy Anderson, MG & Master Naturalist, presented the continuing education program, From Xeriscape to Nativescape

Hill Country Master Gardeners 2021 Executive Committee

Anne Brown
President

Patti Schlessiger
Vice President

Secretary
Donna Nutt

Jackie Connelly
Treasurer

Rachel Garrison
Ex-officio Advisor

C.E.A. Advisor
Angela Fiedler

Committees & Project Coordinators are listed on our website

Newsletter & Website

Newsletter Editor
Pat Wolters

Associate Newsletter Editor
Patti Schlessiger

Special thanks to
Judy Beauford for
proofreading

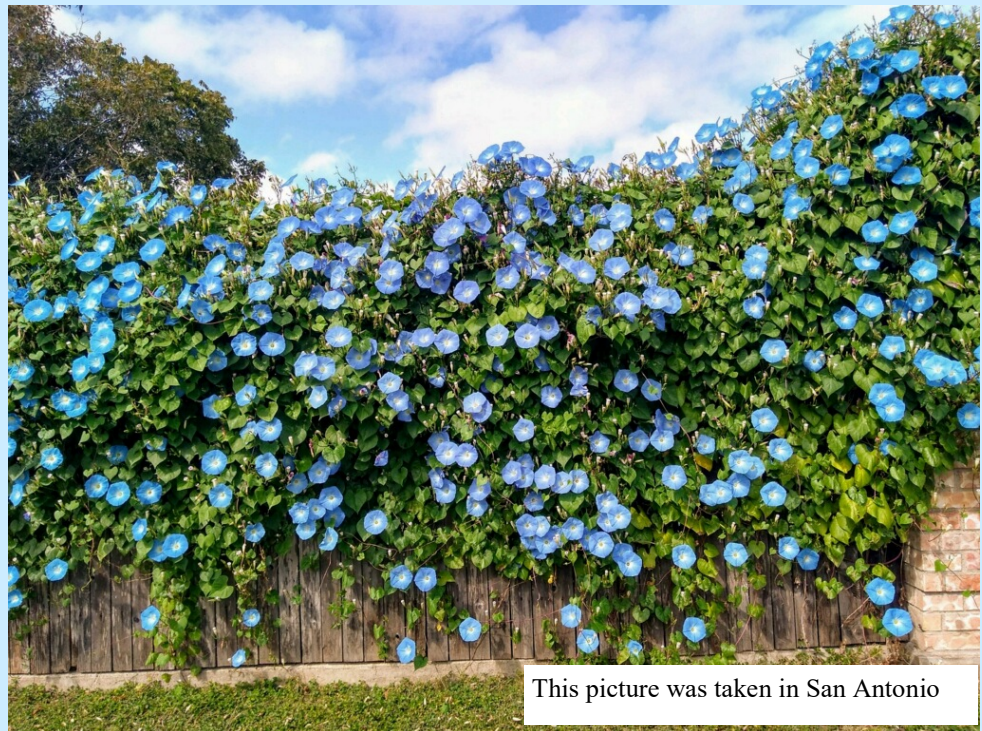
Photographer
Mark Shultz

Submissions to
Pat Wolters, Editor

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or

Newsletter.editor.hcmg
@gmail.com



This picture was taken in San Antonio

The Heavenly Blue Morning Glory has the misfortune of being related to that hideous bind weed, commonly known as morning glory, which is an invasive weed that threatens every gardener's sanity. *But everyone has a relative like that: the person who prejudices all acquaintances against the family by being continually obnoxious.* **Heavenly Blue Morning Glory, on the other hand, is a touch of cool blue paradise that won't give you any trouble.**

It is an annual vine that germinates, when the weather is getting reliably warm, in moderate numbers from last year's plant. Or it can be started in a pot easily. **The first leaves are purplish green, sort of square, and notched in on the outer edge.** The seedling is large enough to transplant easily to various locations around the yard, which I do every year, liking to mix up the landscape combinations.

The plant will thrive in full sun, but can be coddled if its beginnings are in shade, as long as it will be able to reach the sunlight in its juvenile stages. **However, if there is too much plant life around it, especially in the shade, it seems to be a favorite snack of the critters that live there.** Here today, and gone tomorrow. If it is in too much shade, the vine will flourish, but you may be short of flowers.

<https://dailyimprovisations.com/the-curse-of-the-heavenly-blue-morning-glory/>