

December, 2023

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**December 6, 2023**

**HCYEC  
 Christmas Party**

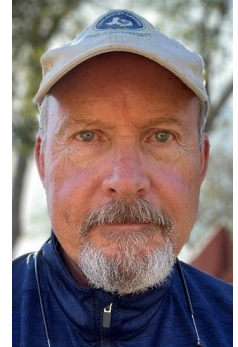
**Noon Potluck**

**Meeting 1:00 pm**



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**President’s Message  
 Dave Kinneberg**



My final message as president! It’s hard to believe my term is almost over.

I’ll leave office with some special memories: seeing Donna Bellis receive her surprise gift from the class of 2023 on graduation day; our 20th anniversary celebration; the Medina field trip and general meeting; and this year’s Fall Festival.

In the past two years, we’ve had two successful B&B’s. The 2022 sale was an incredible experience. How could so many plants disappear in under twenty minutes? The sale this year was less hectic, and, when the doors closed, there were still a few plants in the building. Personally, I prefer “less hectic.”

I need to thank the members of the executive committee for keeping me on the “straight and narrow” for two years. Patti Schlessiger (who organized the 20th anniversary and the Medina field trip) and Rae Raiford were both great VP’s. Rachel Garrison kept our finances in order (and was awarded the “Volunteer of the Year Award in 2022) and Rita Aliperto did a wonderful job as secretary. It’s easy to be president with super people on your team.

Most of all, I want to thank Anne Brown for her advice and encouragement. She was always there when I needed help, whether with an administrative issue or keeping track of visitors at an event. I can’t think of the number of times I turned to her for support, and she never failed to deliver.

My one regret: our by-laws will not be updated before my term expires. However, if the newly elected executive committee wants to move forward with this project (and I believe they should), I’m willing to help.

Speaking of our new officers, I wish them “smooth sailing.” Changes are coming and, undoubtedly, there will be challenges. But I’m confident the new executive team is up to the task.

Finally, thanks to everyone in HCMG for contributing to this wonderful organization during the past two years. And for giving me the honor of being president.



## A Superb Fall Festival!

**Photo Credit: Vickie Killeen**

**Photo Captions: Bee Evans & Vickie Killeen**

More than 120 visitors enjoyed touring our Demonstration Garden on Saturday, October 28.

Our guests viewed native & adaptive plants that perform well in our sometimes challenging Hill Country growing conditions. In addition, residents of our community had their gardening questions answered, took home gardening handouts, and attended educational programs.

Weeks of preparation assured that our garden looked its best. Some much-appreciated rain perked up our plants, and dedicated garden volunteers added finishing touches with seasonal pumpkins, scarecrows and pops of fall color. Homemade refreshments for everyone to enjoy was the icing on the cake!



Above: Drip irrigation and meticulous care by volunteers had our garden looking lush.



Above: Bee Evans, Kay Nelson and Lisa Cantini of the Festival Planning Committee spent many hours working on our event.



Left: Purple Fountain Grass – After overnight rain, matted down mulch got a gentle raking by demo garden volunteer Abigail Reagan during early morning set-up.

Right: Adding last minute color the morning of the festival are Darla Cluster and Sue Hall







HCMG Janice Walker, Anne Brown & Debra Bass pause for a moment near our refreshments.



## Superb Fall Festival



A Demo Garden visitor admires the Purple Hyacinth Bean vine growing on the pergola.



Above left: HCMG Pam Umstead guides a guest through a section of the garden under development for turf grass.



Above right: Portions of the garden paths stayed busy throughout the festival.





## Fall Festival



**Clockwise from top left:**  
HCMG Anne Brown offered a program and handouts on Firewise Landscaping with tips to make homes more wildfire resistant.

Hard-working volunteer Debbie Bacon relaxes in the garden.

HCMG Connie Townsend's Fall Vegetables program always draws a crowd

Cheryl Landrum and Abigail Reagan, HCMG garden volunteers, answer questions and offer gardening advice.





## 2023 Fall Festival

By Dave Kinneberg

Having lost our long-time leader, the Demonstration Garden committee (DGC) was determined to go forward with one of Jackie Skinner's wishes: increase community awareness of our Demonstration Garden by organizing a Fall Festival. Despite horrendous summer temperatures and stage 4 watering restrictions, we celebrated our "First Annual Fall Festival" on October 28. And, by all measures, the event was a success.

To begin with, the Demonstration Garden looked spectacular. DGC members did a wonderful job of maintaining their sections throughout the difficult summer. We held a workday the week before the festival to put down new mulch and to clean the beds. (And Brian Strickland deserves a "thank you" for negotiating special pricing on the mulch and St. Augustine sod.) Many DGC members brought in personal decorations to give the garden a holiday look. And Kay Nelson, who took charge of this project and deserves much of the credit for our success, purchased pumpkins and mums to add color. As Master Gardeners, we felt we had to offer a beautiful garden to the public and we did.

Over 120 people showed up to walk through the Demonstration Garden, to talk to Master Gardeners, and to listen to our two featured speakers, Connie Townsend and Anne Brown. Thanks to our advertising campaign, people came from as far north as Austin and as far south as Tarpley and San Antonio. Even though the event was scheduled from 10 am to 2 pm, visitors arrived early, and some lingered until 4 pm.

People were impressed. One of Vickie's neighbors sent the following email:



Our American Beautyberry's vibrant color attracted visitors' attention.



"Event was so enjoyable and info from two presentations very helpful. You Master Gardeners certainly positively impact our community." Several HCMG volunteers mentioned how much fun it was to have the time to speak to local residents about their concerns and to hear from them of their successes.

And the best part: when it was all over, Jackie Skinner let us know she "was terribly proud." As they say in Hill Country, we did good.

(pictured are Vickie's neighbors and husband)  
 Photo Credit: Vickie Killeen



## Hill Country Veggies

By Allen Mace, MG

It's the Holyday Season once again. Wow, this year has flown by. I always like to reflect back on how the past year went by. This year, I just can't get past the hot summer, so I'll just forget it and focus on next year. I do have a

few plants to put into a winter garden, but I am still a week or two out. I want to grow the roots out a little more. I want to show what I do when dealing with transplants. I learned this when I first started with Master Gardeners. I encourage all the interns to get involved the next few months when we start gearing up for our annual plant sale. The process of preparing transplants to be sold at our sale, will also help you prepare your vegetable transplants for your gardens. I know it helped me.

1. Gather up the tools that I will be using. These include something to put potting soil in, then you will need a bag of quality potting soil.

2. Pull out some coffee filters and place one in the bottom of a 6" pot.

3. Fill the pot with the soil.

4. Put the 6" pot into a plastic tray, this will catch any water that flows through the pot and will re-absorb back into the pot later.

5. After all the transplants have been repotted, I then water the plants. I use a water-soluble fertilizer, mixed into a 2 gallon watering can and then give each plant a drink. By taking the shower head off the watering can this allows me to direct the water to the soil and avoid getting the leaves wet.

6. Place all the plastic trays where they will get some early morning sun and still be protected from any hot afternoon sun. The plants will stay here for a few weeks as they acclimate to the sun and temperature. This

gives them time to grow out their roots before being planted into the garden. This seems to be a lot of work and preparation, but this has helped me get a jumpstart in my gardens and I'm sure it will help you as well.



**Tools of the Trade**



**Acclimating**



**Coffee filters**



**Growing Roots**



**Watering**

**To enjoy the process is to enjoy the journey. I pray that all of you have a wonderful Holyday Season.**



## Fall Festival Featured Flora & Fauna

Our Demo Garden is home to wildlife. Some enjoy being photographed!



HCMG Tom Collins identified this Pipevine Swallowtail feeding on Texas Sage, the State Native Shrub of Texas.



This little anole tries to mimic the colors and patterns of our Provence French



A Monarch caterpillar feasts on the leaves of a milkweed plant. Milkweed, the only plant Monarch caterpillars eat, is vital for the Monarch's life cycle. HCMG Sheryl Landrum pointed out this well-fed little guy during our Fall Festival.



A mature Monarch butterfly poses for HCMG Pam Umstead's camera during our Fall Festival.



An anole wants to blend in with green foliage and yellow blooms.

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Pam Umstead & Vickie Killeen

**PHOTO CAPTIONS:** Bee Evans & Vickie Killeen



**Hill Country Master Gardeners  
 Monthly Meeting  
 November 1, 2023  
 HCYEC**

**Call to Order** Dave called the meeting to order.

**The Pledge of Allegiance** was recited by the group.

**Invocation** – Ray Tiemann delivered a beautiful invocation.

**Welcome/Opening Remarks** – Dave Kinneberg welcomed the group and guests.

**Verification of Quorum** – Rita Aliperto verified a quorum had been met.

**Approval of Minutes** from October 4, 2023, Meeting – Imelda Horne moved the October minutes to be approved. The motion was seconded by Brian Strickland.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Dave explained the report in Rachel Garrison’s absence.

**Business Items**

New Members! Congratulations to Suzy Floyd and Barbara Hoffman for completing their certification and becoming new Master Gardeners. They were presented with their badge and certificate.

**Executive Committee Nominations & Vote**

– Dave announced the nominated slate of officers and asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. Since there weren’t any, a vote was taken and the new slate of officers consisting of Sheryl Landrum, Rae Raiford, Marge Muniz and Jackie Connelly were unanimously approved by the group.

**Charity of the Year Nominations & Vote**

– Dave asked for nominations for this year’s charity. Kerr County is next in the rotation of the counties we serve. Frank Dunlap recommended we choose Mercy Gate Ministries. Frank explained that the organization is involved in helping individuals who are trafficked or abused. The group unanimously voted for Mercy Gate for this year’s charity. (More information is available at [mercygateministries.com](http://mercygateministries.com))

**Volunteer of the Year Reminder**

– Dave said the deadline for nominations is November 15th. So far, he has two nominations. The Executive Committee will vote on the nominees at the next meeting.

**Congratulations to new Hill Country Master Gardeners**



Lisa Cantini, mentor, Suzy Floyd, & Dave Kinneberg



Barbara Hoffman & Dave Kinneberg



*Meeting continued from page 9*

### **Standing Committee Reports**

**Education** – Donna Bellis provided the date for the next committee meeting. She recommended that we still actively try to recruit folks to sign up for the 2024 class as we've lost some. The next Facilitator training will be December 7th. If you are a Facilitator or want to be one, please come. Notebooks will also be assembled at the training.

**Membership** – Barbara Castillo explained the dues and volunteer agreement process and hours necessary, depending on your status. She stated that everyone needs to turn in their \$20 dues and volunteer agreements no later than December 31, 2023.

**Demonstration Garden** – Dave Kinneberg spoke about the success of the recent Fall Festival. He said there were about 120 visitors at the event. He thanked Kay Nelson for organizing, along with Bee Evans and the entire DG team. He thanked Anne Brown and Connie Townsend for teaching the classes; Tamara Ruby for the hospitality set up; and Tex Lang and Vickie Killeen for their PR work. There will be a few changes at next year's event, but all-in-all it was a success.

**Greenhouse** – Kay Nelson said there was nothing to report at this time.

**Research Desk & Rain Barrels** – Anne Brown stated she has about \$2,200 in rain barrel sales waiting to be deposited. She has 13 left to sell out of the 50 barrels purchased. She is purchasing another 50 barrels and will announce a workday soon to retrofit them.

### **Other Announcements**

**Holiday Celebration** – Tamara Ruby explained the Christmas party table decoration contest. She provided the group with possible themes for their table. For more information or to sign up for a table, please contact Tamara Ruby or Rachel Garrison.

**Glory Community Garden** – Pam Umstead announced there will be a ribbon-

cutting for the new building on Thursday, November 30th at 11am. This event also coincides with the 10th anniversary of the first groundbreaking on the Glory Community Garden site.

**Final Comments** – Dave Kinneberg made everyone aware that the January general meeting will be changed from January 3rd to January 10th due to a scheduling issue at HCYEC.

Jackie Connelly thanked everyone for getting their hours logged into VMS. She stated there will be a lot of Presidential Awards given out at the December meeting.

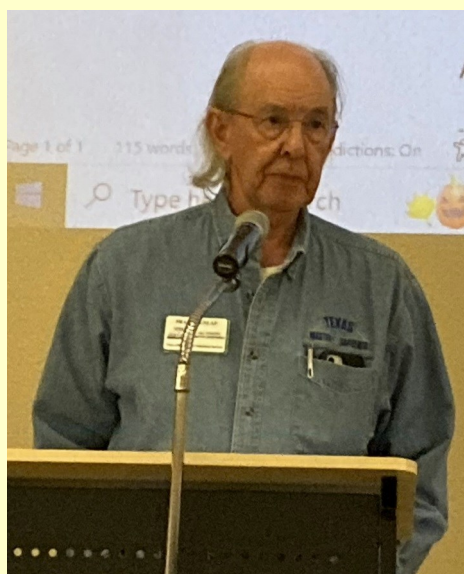
Louise Haney won the door prize.

Ray Tiemann brought a giant box of plant cuttings for anyone to take.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,  
Rita Aliperto, Secretary

Next Meeting: December 6, 2023 HCYEC  
(See details in upcoming e-minders.)



Frank Dunlap's nomination of Mercy Gate Ministries as our 2023 charitable donation was accepted by the membership. The annual charitable donation rotates among the counties served by our Hill Country chapter of Texas Master Gardeners. This year's donation is in Kerr County.  
Photo Credit: Vickie Killeen



**Hill Country Master Gardeners 2023 Executive Committee**

Dave Kinneberg  
*President*

Rae Raiford  
*Vice President*

Rita Aliperto  
*Secretary*

Rachel Garrison  
*Treasurer*

Anne Brown  
*Ex-officio Advisor*

*C.E.A. Advisor*

**Committees & Project Coordinators are listed on our website**

**Newsletter**

*Newsletter Editor*  
 Pat Wolters

*Associate Newsletter Editor*  
 Patti Schlessiger

*Photographer*  
 Vickie Killeen

**Submissions to**

**Pat Wolters, Editor**

Patwolters2865  
 @hotmail.com

**HCMG newly elected officers**, who will begin serving in January 2024, are Marge Muniz, secretary; Rae Raiford, vice president; Jackie Connelly, treasurer and Sheryl Landrum, president.



**The Benefits of Growing Thyme**

This mediterranean plant is in the mint family. Whether you like creeping thyme, common (English) thyme, lemon thyme or French thyme, you will find a variety to suit your needs. It is cold-hardy, and drought tolerant. (taken from an article in the Tenth Acre Farm newsletter)

- 1. It is easy to grow:** This herb does not take a lot of care. Harvest it often to keep it naturally pruned. Otherwise, cut the woody stems back by half each fall.
- 2. It is good medicine:** (AgriLife does not approve the medicinal use of plants). Thyme is often used in natural remedies. As an antiviral herb, it is especially helpful with common cold symptoms, coughs, and bronchial infections. It is also a strong antiseptic for cuts, scrapes, acne or sore muscles.
- 3. Thyme is a delicious culinary herb:** This herb can be used both fresh and dried in the kitchen. It is popularly used in a dried poultry herb blend or in herbes de provence seasoning blend. For something different, try making calendula and thyme shortbread cookies or black cherry preserves with thyme.
- 4. Thyme attracts beneficial insects and pollinators:** This flowering herb attracts a wide variety of pollinators and is especially favored by lacewings, a beneficial insect, for egg-laying habitat. Lacewing larvae are voracious predators of aphids, whiteflies, cabbage moth caterpillars, and many others. For this reason, plant thyme around the edges of the vegetable garden and underneath your fruit trees.
- 5. It is a pest repellent:** This herb's strong scent confuses pests sniffing out their favorite crops to devour. It's also deer resistant. Hurrah!
- 6. Thyme reduces erosion:** Reducing soil erosion is an important goal in our gardens and landscapes, since we export 3 tons of topsoil per acre per year in America alone. The roots have a deep, fibrous growth habit that is perfect for growing on erosion-prone slopes.