

June 2022

Volume 20, Issue 6

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**HCMG**  
**June 1, 2022**  
**HCYEC**

**1:00** Business Meeting  
**2:00** Program

**The Benefits of Native Plants for Your Vegetable Gardens**

*Becky Leal*



See  
 page 8  
 for  
 details

“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**

*Dave Kinneberg*



Of the many conferences I attended during my career, not one involved horticulture. Consequently, I looked forward to attending the 2022 Texas MG Conference. I discovered it wasn’t much different from any other professional get-together (although the slides were prettier). Now that it’s over, I want to report back to our membership.

To begin with, it was virtual and, judging from some of the organizer’s comments, my guess is there will be more of these in the future. The advantages are evident: easy to attend, large audience (750 participants), speakers from all over the country and low cost. However, I missed the personal interactions afforded by conventional conferences, the chance to mingle and meet people with similar issues and problems. Face-to-face interactions seem much more satisfying. (And my limit for staring at a computer screen is four hours. My daughter warned me that virtual conferences never leave enough break time and she was right.)

For simplicity (and so I could record my hours on VMS), I divided presentations into two categories: administration and horticulture. As a new officer, I attended presentations that offered to help me do my job better. The entire first day was devoted to leadership and included such topics as risk management, diversity, conflict resolution, financial accountability and dealing with minors. These are important subjects and must be properly addressed in any organization. I felt I was back at work taking mandatory HR training. As I listened, I asked myself: Are we in HCMG doing what we need to do? I believe we are but wonder if we can’t do better regarding diversity. More on this later.

Over the next two days, keynote presentations alternated with “breakout sessions” which offered a choice of four presentations. All presentations were recorded and, in a couple of weeks, will be available on the TGM website so I can go back and view the ones I missed. Here again, I tried to pick “admin” presentations. Topics included money management and reinvestment, targeting programs, and partnerships.

*Continued on page 2*

***President's message continued from page 1***

As before, there was nothing I saw requiring changes at HCMG. However, one “partner” came to mind that I believe is worth pursuing: Schreiner University. With their new agricultural program set to begin soon, there seems to be a natural connection between HCMG and Schreiner that will benefit both parties. A project to assist with their community garden has already been approved and I am hopeful that we can get a professor or two from Schreiner for CEU presentations.

One of the most interesting presentations (and I was surprised by this) was entitled “Marketing to Generation Me” in which “Generation Me” was defined as anyone born after the “boomers.” A common problem for MG is attracting young people. While I could have guessed that gardeners over the age of 35 tend to be women, it was interesting to learn that gardeners under 35 tend to be men. And now is a great time to attract new members; COVID drove many people to garden for the first time.

Should HCMG try to attract more young people? I won't presume to give an answer here. But if we ever want to, two areas are critical according to the presenter: Junior Master Gardeners (“get the kids excited and they will bring their parents”) and having an attractive and constantly updated website. Unfortunately, we don't have a chairperson for the Jr MG committee or a webmaster (although we have dedicated members who are doing a great job “keeping us afloat”). Of course, partnering with Schreiner is another means of attracting a younger crowd.

On the horticultural side, the only presenter I recognized was George Cates, the fellow from Junction who spoke to us in April. There was a presentation on “gardening with aches, pains and injuries” that I attended because, at the request of a HCMG member, I am trying to find an expert in this area to speak at a CEU lecture. (Not a good fit in this case.) The virtual tours of various public gardens were well done. I am now planning a visit to the A&M gardens in College Station. There were several other presentations with appealing titles that need to be reviewed once the recordings are available.

Disappointingly, one topic I hoped would be addressed but which only came up briefly in the form of a question was succession planning. After a very impressive presentation on a complex garden project, an author was asked about his succession plan. His answer: “they will have to drag another old guy off the street.” He was joking of course. Very few “old guys” have his credentials. The real answer is that he has no succession plan. This is a topic I would like to address in detail next month.

“Plants teach us how to overcome adversity” was a common theme for this conference. Master gardeners, by educating the public, are performing an invaluable service, one in which we can all be proud. While the conferences I attended in the past helped me become a better professional (and I am proud of my career as a metallurgist), the 2022 Texas Master Gardener Conference highlighted how important our volunteer work with HCMG is in making the world a better place.

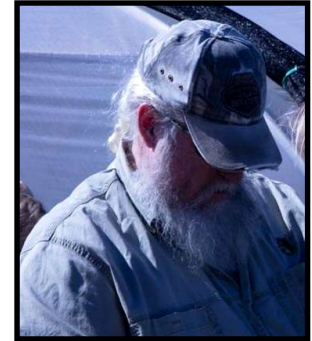


## Hill Country Veggies

By Allen Mace, MG

**It's hot, and that's all I'm gonna say about that. I've been battling the wind out of the south for over a month now, that's enough.**

Ok ranting is over. We are off to another spring vegetable season and nothing is normal again, but we still need to move forward. This year I've planted squash, both yellow and butternut, tomatoes, potatoes and sweet potatoes. I held them back a few weeks because of all the wind. They're in the ground with lots of mulch, because of the heat. So far, all is well. I water in the morning and spray the plants in the afternoon, just to cool them off a bit. So far, all is well. This year I switched to tall pots and made a few tall wicking beds in an effort to thwart the bunnies. So far, all is well. I still have a few tomatoes and cucumbers to plant but for now, all is well. We'll see how things look next month.



**Cell System**

This spring I've purchased a few new toys to play with. I want to start my own seeds. I have found a few items that have worked out well. I found a small cell starting system. It has 12 cells to start plants in, a water reservoir that the 12 cells sit in, a plastic dome to create a humid environment with a vent and a grow light built into the vent. I'm always a sucker for new gadgets and I like this set up. I picked up a series of sieves in order to screen out the larger material from the potting mix. This worked great and I was able to screen the mix down to very small particles of soil. This works well for starting seed. A few years ago, a friend of mine and I used these same screens in Colorado panning for gold. It separates the material down to the finest dust. We didn't find any gold but the system works for potting mix.



**Sieves**



I have decided to try and make peace with the bunnies. This is why I have switched to tall pots and wicking beds. The only adjustment I had to make was to move the fencing panels a bit after the deer discovered they could reach the potato plants. I came across a system for converting 5 gallon buckets into wicking buckets. Once again, always a sucker for gadgets, I made the order. It's a plastic plate that fits down inside the bucket. The plate has legs to hold it about 4 inches off the bottom. In the middle of the plate is a hole for a plastic cup that is filled with soil. There is a water fill tube used to fill the 4-inch space below the plastic plate. The soil in the center cup acts as a wick to draw water from the reservoir. Watering from below, causes plants to push their root systems deeper into the soil thus making a stronger plant with a robust root system. I had made a wicking bucket a few weeks ago using a different method, but the same concept. It's been an interesting spring. So far, all is well



**Wicking Bucket**

## Mock Orange

By Darla Cluster, MG and Sue Hall, MG



When we joined the Demo Garden Committee in 2019 and accepted responsibility for section 13, we inherited a mock orange, a plant with which neither of us had previous experience. For two years we watched it expand beyond its designated area, draping over surrounding plants. The more we tried to ignore it, the more determined it was to be seen.

From time to time we discussed cutting it back, plant division and finally, banishing it from section 13. However, being trained Master Gardeners, we first did research. Interestingly, every article on a mock orange showed a picture of a shrub covered in striking white flowers. Yet, ours continued to occupy space without any hint of flowering.

You can only imagine Darla's surprise to arrive at the garden one Thursday morning in March and see gorgeous, delicate white flowers on our mock orange. She notified Sue, who could not wait to get to the garden for fear they were magical and would disappear before she got to see them. Patience paid off. The mock orange has been a beautiful sight in Section 13 this spring providing the perfect backdrop for the Double Pink Knock Out Rose.

According to Dr. Jerry Parsons, horticulturist with the Texas AgriLife Extension, "There are many species of the mock orange genus, *Philadelphus*." He also notes certain species make excellent flowering shrubs to grow in Texas hardiness zones from 2-9. While partial shade is listed as well as full sun, Parsons recommends full sun for maximum blooms.

Jackie Skinner, chairman of the Demo Garden Committee, identifies the mock orange in section 13 as a *Philadelphus coronarius* from the family Hydrangeaceae which originated in Southern Europe and Asia Minor. This species was possibly introduced to the New World by Thomas Jefferson as his horticulture journals at Monticello show he grew 3 such plants in his garden. This species grows from 8-12 feet tall with a mature width of 6-8 feet. Its branches cascade from the plant center and its flowers are fragrant like orange blossoms, thus its common name.

Mock Orange is a deciduous shrub, that prefers moist, well-drained sandy loam. It should be pruned soon after its spring flowering season to allow time for maturation since its buds develop from the previous year's growth. It can be propagated from seed or from cuttings taken in the summer. Texas AgriLife has identified a native Texas mock orange (*Philadelphus texensis* Saxifragaceae) that grows in a very limited area of limestone rocks and boulders on the Edwards Plateau. It does adapt to the heavy soils in the Dallas area but requires quite a bit of water to get established. Due to its restricted range in Texas, the native mock orange has been placed on the TOES V (species of concern list). The small shrub provides food for deer and pollinators in that area, making it a most beneficial plant. It is also classified as an Earth-Kind shrub.

## A Long-Awaited Propagation Workshop

By Vickie Killeen, MG

Who can forget the Covid-19 lockdown in the Spring of 2020? It's taken 2 years to be able to offer our Class of 2020 a makeup session of our popular propagation workshop. Perhaps the participants can show us their successes at a future meeting.



Class participants listen to instructions as facilitators Janice Walker, Sandy Lewis, Anne Brown, Cattina Gonzalez and Jodi Tippens at the back of the room prepare to hand out plant materials.



The class fashions humidifiers from plastic liter bottles to protect rose cuttings.

*More pictures on page 9*

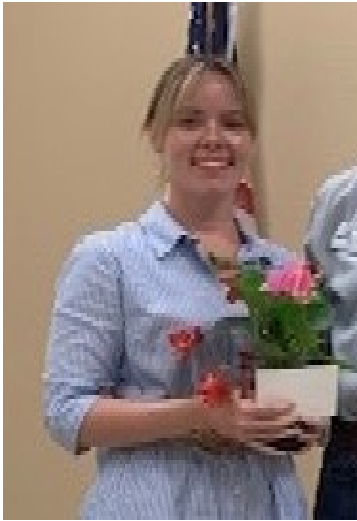


Instructor Debra Bass explains separation propagation while facilitator Janice Walker demonstrates the process on Bicolor Iris. Observing are graduates of our Class of 2020. From left: Dave Kinneberg, Marge Muniz, Rita Aliperto, Phil Roberson (Class of 2022), Lola Auger and Allan Perry.



## *Graduation Day 2022*

*Photo Credit: Pat Wolters*



**Shannon Stuteville**



**Sheridan Stringer**



**Aimee Tennant**



**Lisa Cantini with Dave Kinneberg,  
President Hill Country Master Gardeners**



**Angelica Vela**



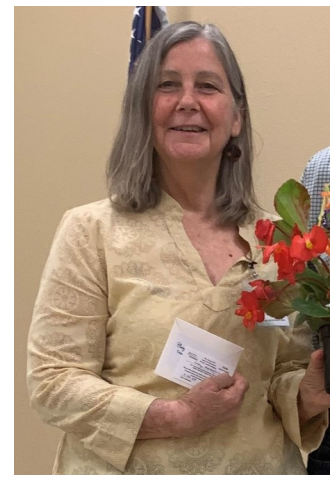
**Michael Bell**



**Brian DeFord**



**Jodi Tippens**



**Cindy Shackelford**



**Pat Corbin**



**Cattina Gonzales**



**Kay Nelson**



**Tex Lang**



**Donna Hugly**



**Tish Hulett**



**Mary Mechler**



**Diane McRae**



**Kaysi Craig**



**Rae Raiford**



**Molly Richardson**



**Phil Roberson**



**Above: Sandy Corbin**  
**Below: Barbara Castillo**



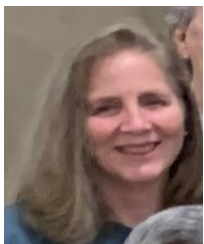
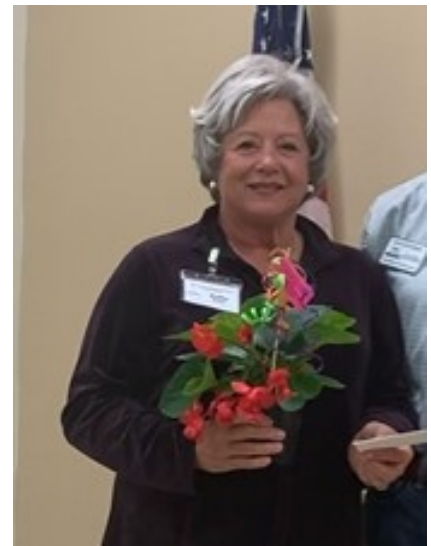
**Debbie Castillo**



**Above: Julie Lewis**  
**Below: Kathy Enke**



Sorry Dave, I didn't have room to keep you in the photos with all the graduates but I did get your name badge-Pat



**Becky Leal**

I am a "naturalized" Texan, moving to Houston from Ohio forty years ago. My husband and I moved to the Kerrville area in 2007 and found out we weren't in Houston anymore after planting non-native plants and watching them die. We met some Texas Master Naturalists who helped us identify the plants on our property and taught us the advantages to adding native plants to our landscaped areas. In 2015, I graduated from the Texas Master Naturalist program and joined the Native Plant Society of Texas. September 1, 2021 was my first day of freedom from a career in Information Technology (I retired) and my chance to be outside more than inside. Because I love to keep learning, I took the Hill Country Master Gardener classes and am currently an intern from the Class of 2022.

**The Benefits of Native Plants for Your Vegetable Garden** discusses how native plants help the vegetable garden with pollination and integrated pest management while providing year-round beauty and interest to your landscape. Topics will include companion planting, hedgerows, and beetle banks with plants native to our area. A handout listing the benefits of each plant in the presentation will be provided. Developing this presentation was an opportunity for me to further research two of my favorite topics – native plants and food gardening.



**Hill Country Master Gardeners  
Monthly Meeting  
May 4, 2022  
HCYEC**

**Call to Order (Please Silence Your Cell Phones)**  
Meeting was called to order by Dave Kinneberg.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Invocation – Ray Tiemann** provided the invocation.

**Verification of Quorum – Rita Aliperto** established a quorum has been met.

**Welcome/Opening Remarks – Dave Kinneberg** welcomed members to a calmer, less frantic meeting than last months.

**Approval of Minutes from April 6, 2022 meeting.** Melayne Arnold moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Brian Strickland.

**Treasurer’s Report – Rachel Garrison** provided a recap of the plant sale. She explained that everything we purchased for the sale was more expensive than last year. She broke down the sales of rain barrels, geraniums, books, and the garden shed. Imelda Horne moved that the treasurer’s report be approved. The motion was seconded by Patty Zohlen.

**Standing Committee Reports**

**B&B Plant Sale – Janell Dahms** thanked everyone for everything they did to make the plant sale a success. She is requesting feedback regarding what could be done differently at next year’s sale. Patti Schlessiger complimented Janell on how smoothly everything went. Janell joked that the sale started with a hum and before long it was like a swarm of locusts came through the room.

**Greenhouse – Fernando Gonzalez** wished

to thank everyone starting in January who helped – potters, waterers, spa volunteers and movers. He reported that the thermostats went out on the greenhouses, and they have since been replaced thanks to Mark Schultz. All the polycarbonate panels on the front of greenhouse 1 were replaced and a part was found that allowed the original door handle to be used. Fernando thanked Allen Mace, Dave Garrison (Rachel’s husband) and Barbara Castillo for their help. Some of the tables are in the process of being replaced and the old tables can be taken by members. Fernando thanked everyone for their work.

**Education – Donna Bellis** announced that they will be meeting in May and will be looking at all the evaluations that the class of 2022 completed.

**Special Opportunities Center Garden Project – Donna**, being the Chair of this project is requesting volunteers to assist. The clients all have mental health issues, developmental or intellectual disabilities. The clients require one-on-one, positive interaction, exercise, and education. The project’s mission is education; to help clients to interact with people, other than staff. In the past, when polled, the clients rated gardening as 1, 2 or 3 favorite activity. Volunteers meet once per week to assist clients work in 8 raised beds, growing vegetables, and flowers. Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Donna Bellis.

**Demonstration Garden – Jackie Skinner** was delighted to report that after last month’s demo garden tour, she was blessed with a flock of garden ferries that came to the rescue (many interns volunteered for the project). She is still requesting volunteer(s) to take over the turf section. She reported it would be a great learning experience for someone. Justin Klinksiek is in the process of getting custom pallets of the different kinds of turf grasses to cover only what we’d need for the project. Patti Schlessiger volunteered use of her tiller.

**Public Programs – Ray Tiemann** spoke about a partnership project between HCMG and the Kerr County Extension Office.

*Continued on page 10*

**Monthly minutes continued from page 9**

He is assisting Justin Klinksiek with training on Thursday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9am-2pm. It will consist of 4 presentations: Rainwater Harvesting, Firewise, Oak Wilt and Turf Grass followed by lunch (included in price) and a tour of the demo garden. The cost will be \$25 per person or \$40 per couple. RSVP to the extension office. Linda Proffitt has indicated that the Hospitality Committee will provide lunch. Another training event on Landscaping is in the planning stages for September 24th and will be held in Gillespie County.

**Research Desk – Anne Brown** reported that 22 out of 27 interns have been trained on the research desk. Additionally, Anne will be putting together a rain barrel party soon and she will need volunteers to help. If you have 1-gallon pots (no other sizes, please), please bring them to the shed as they are needed in the rain barrels.

**Logo Wear – Melayne Arnold** will be placing an order soon for logo wear. According to the vendor, if we get a sizeable order, there will be a discount. Melayne has updated to pricing in anticipation of a large order. Please fill out the form, and leave it, along with a check, and place in the folder at the mailboxes in the office.

**Other Announcements**

**2022 Virtual Master Gardener Conference, May 9-11** -if anyone not attending the conference have questions they'd like to ask, please let Dave know so he can ask on your behalf.

**Darla Cluster won the door prize.**

**Tom Daniels Elementary School – Imelda Horne** showed and read portions of the thank you notes from 4<sup>th</sup> graders they received following the pollination/pollinators presentation. Presenters were Kara Grant, Cindy Shackelford, and Imelda Horne.

**Adjournment**

**Rita Aliperto, Secretary**

**Next Meeting: June 1, 2022 HCYEC**

**Propagation Workshop continued from page 4**



All of the attendees took home a variety of propagation techniques, including an assortment of Amaryllis bulb chips.



Phil Roberson slices into a Rex begonia leaf for leaf vein cutting propagation.

**Hill Country Master Gardeners 2022**

**Executive Committee**

Dave Kinneberg  
*President*

Patti Schlessiger  
*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 & Website**

*Newsletter Editor*  
 Pat Wolters

*Associate Newsletter Editor*  
 Patti Schlessiger

Special thanks to  
 Judy Beauford for proofreading

*Photographer*  
 Mark Shultz

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Patwolters2865  
 @hotmail.com

**or**

Newsletter.editor.hcmg  
 @gmail.com



**Chinese Wisteria**

By Pat Wolters, MG

Common Name	Chinese wisteria
Botanical Name	Wisteria sinensis
Family	Fabaceae
Plant Type	Deciduous perennial vine
Mature Size	10–25 ft. long, 4–8 ft. spread
Sun Exposure	Full sun to partial sun
Soil Type	Medium moist, well-draining
Soil pH	6.0–7.0 (slightly acidic to neutral)
Bloom Time	May to June
Flower Color	Bluish-purple, mauve, white
Hardiness Zones	5–8 (USDA)
Native Area	Asia

I took this picture behind the old school house on Upper Turtle Creek Road in Kerrville. It is growing in a vacant field and I would bet that no one planted it or has cared for it. This area sure doesn't meet the soil moisture, fertilizer or pH requirements but apparently this particular wisteria doesn't mind!

**Chinese wisteria** (*Wisteria sinensis*) is a deciduous perennial vine with a twining growth habit. Like all members of the wisteria group, Chinese wisteria is a stunning bloomer. It bears large, drooping clusters of fragrant flowers from May to June, typically a bluish-purple. If you plant it, it's best to plant it in the spring or fall. This vine is a vigorous climber that can grow to 25 feet tall. Trellises and other supports must be sturdy enough to hold the plant's weight. Chinese wisteria is a rapid grower that can take up to 20 years to mature enough to produce flowers. It also tends to be very long-lived.

**WARNING** Chinese wisteria is toxic. It is also an aggressive grower and is an invasive plant in the United States. American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*), a North American native plant, is a less aggressive alternative. If you want a wisteria and do not already have one, it would be more responsible to choose the American wisteria or Kentucky wisteria. American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*) is a smaller species than the Chinese and Japanese species; it matures sooner than its Asian counterparts, flowering at a younger age. It is not as aggressive as the non-native Chinese wisteria.

Fertilizer is unnecessary for Chinese wisteria unless the soil is poor and infertile. To amend poor soil, add a layer of compost to promote growth and blooming. The most likely reason your wisteria won't bloom is too much nitrogen in the soil. To correct this, add a phosphorus-rich fertilizer. You can also reduce nitrogen by root pruning or reducing the number of roots a plant has. Also, make sure that your plant is receiving plenty of sun and good water drainage.

***Information taken from an article on [www.thespruce.com](http://www.thespruce.com)***