

May 2023
Volume 21 Issue 5

President's Message	1
Graduation	2
Spa Day	3-4
Moving Day	5-6
Blooms & Barrels	7-8
Demo Garden gets Mulched	9
Wildflower of the Year	10-11
Minutes	12-13
Gardening 101	14

Wednesday

May 3, 2023

HCYEC

Meeting 1:00 pm
CEU 2:00 pm

House Plants

By
Kay Nelson

See bio on page 13

"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

Watching Donna Bellis receive appreciation gifts from the 2023 class was one of the best memories I will take away from my time as president. Donna certainly deserved the gifts. No one in HCMG is more committed to her job - and that's saying a lot given the time and effort put in by some of our members.



Photo credit:
Vickie Killeen

However, it wasn't so much that Donna deserved the gifts that made this special. It was that the 2023 class recognized she did. Rita Aliperto, HCMG secretary and one of my 2020 classmates, asked during our potluck celebration, "Why didn't we do something like that?" My quick answer was that our class was disrupted by COVID. Maybe. Or perhaps the 2023 class was better at recognizing the wonderful job Donna does. Whatever the case, I'm impressed. If they understand plants as well as they understand people, the 2023 class will make great MG's.

Of course, Donna would be the first person to credit her team; many people pitched in to make the training program successful. However, Donna was the person in charge.

Continued on page 13

2023 Graduates!



Front l to r: Betty Loy-Pinard, Maria Soupley, Suzy Floyd, Jeanne Sutton, Sheryl Handrum, Susan Thomas, Tamara Ruby
Middle Row: Mary Contois, Bill Haney, Louise Haney, Barbara Hoffman, Sharon Walling, Jeannie Osborne, Linda Lockhart, Abigail Regain, Eva Euler
Back Row: President Dave Kinneberg, Barbara Green, Brian Schroder, Karen Tabor, Sonja Wilke, Meta Pugh, Julie Thieriot, James Ludwig, County Agent Mike Morris



Left: High 5's for our new grads



Students receive graduation tomatoes and greenhouse Plumbago

Photo Credit: Vickie Killeen





Spa Day

Photo Credit: Patti Schlessiger





Moving Day





Moving Day



BLOOMS AND BARRELS SALE



Pam Umstead greets early arrivals to the B&B sale





BLOOMS AND BARRELS



GARDEN SHED

Demo Garden Gets Mulched

By Jackie Skinner



Clockwise from top left:

Dave Cobb, Marge Muniz (background), and Debbie Bacon making light of heavy work.

Tom Collins, Jackie Skinner, Dave Kinneberg, Kay Nelson, Marge Muniz, and Rita Aliperto happy to know they "got 'er done."

Debbie Castillo, Jodi Tippens, Aimee Tennant, and Barbara Castillo justifiably proud of the accomplishment.

Aimee Tennant and Rachel Garrison pausing for a picture between loads. Marge Muniz "towing that barge" in the background
Committee member Allan Perry, the first one to arrive and get the ball rolling.





Mealy Blue Sage is a great plant for every size garden, and comes in several colors – dark blue, “mealy blue,” and white.

Wildflower of the Year – Mealy Blue Sage

Unknown to me 12 months ago when I chose Mealy Blue Sage as our Spring N.I.C.E. plant, this beautiful Texas native perennial was to be named the “Wildflower of the Year” by Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center for 2023. Their website (wildflower.org) says “Drought-tolerant, deer-resistant and capable of thriving in a variety of soils, it doesn’t get much more low-maintenance than mealy blue sage (*Salvia farinacea*). But even if our 2023 Wildflower of the Year required hours of toil, it would still be a plant worth celebrating. This native perennial has an exceptionally long bloom period, adding color to gardens from early spring to late fall. Plus, it’s a pollinator powerhouse, supporting hummingbirds and butterflies with its sweet nectar.”



Cindy Anderson

Texas is a large, diverse state and plants that work for one region may not always be the best choice in a different region. The Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT) created the N.I.C.E. Native Plant Partners program to help nurseries offer natives that are right for the local environment. Two local chapters of NPSOT, the Kerrville and Fredericksburg chapters, implement this program by choosing one native plant to promote each season – in cooperation with wholesalers, in order to assure availability – and in cooperation with participating local nurseries.

The N.I.C.E. acronym stands for “Natives Improve and Conserve Environments.” The goal of the program is to introduce people to great native plants that are available locally to use in place of non-native species.

WHY PLANT NATIVES? The home page of the state website, NPSOT.org, says:

- Native plants are drought tolerant, naturally conserving our precious water resources.
- Native plants provide habitat and food for birds, butterflies, bees and other wildlife.
- Native plants don’t need special pampering or fertilizing.
- Natives are natural to their eco-system.
- Natives help us maintain biological diversity.

MEALY BLUE SAGE

This wonderful native plant is not just your typical “wildflower.” When we think of wildflowers, most of us think of short-term splashes of color alongside roadways that disappear after a few weeks – things like bluebonnets, Indian paintbrush, and pink evening primrose. But mealy blue sage belongs firmly in the category of “Perennial Powerhouse” – growing happily in our thin limestone soils, producing flowers from spring to the first frost, all the while feeding nectar to our bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

This plant is available in nurseries in dark blue, “mealy-blue,” and white. The name “mealy blue” comes from the dense cover of matlike wooly hairs on the stems and leaves. This silver fuzz is the “mealiness” that gives the plant its name.

Growing 2-3 feet tall, mealy blue sage will form a clump about 1-2 feet wide. It prefers low water and full sun or part shade. Overly wet soils will weaken the plant. If heavy spring rains (which we have not seen lately) make your plant too leggy, cut it back to only a few leaves and let it branch. The drier the soil, the more shade it can handle – or the wetter the soil, the more sun it will need. A thick clump can be divided every couple of years to a new location as the original continues to spread.

WHERE TO FIND IT

Our local N.I.C.E. nurseries have happily agreed to stock up on our Plant of the Season in order to have it available to the public. These independent nurseries carry only the best plants for our area, as well as high-quality soil amendments and gardening supplies.

Look for the “N.I.C.E. Plant of the Season” sign stake at these nurseries and growers in Kerrville, Fredericksburg, Medina, and Comfort:

Natives of Texas, 4256 Medina Highway, Kerrville, 830-896-2169

Plant Haus 2, 604 Jefferson Street, Kerrville, 830-792-4444

The Gardens at The Ridge, 13439 S. Ranch Road 783 (Harper Rd.), Kerrville, 830-896-0430

The Garden Haus, 31 Highway 87 North, Comfort, 830-995-5610

Friendly Natives, 1107 N. Llano Street, Fredericksburg, 830-997-6288

Medina Garden Nursery, 13417 Tx. Highway 16, Medina, 830-589-2771

Our chapter website contains articles of past N.I.C.E. plants, going back as far as 2009. To peruse the list, go to our website: npsot.org/kerrville, click on the “NICE!” tab, and then choose “NICE Plant Archive” for the list of featured plants.

The Kerrville Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas hosts monthly programs at the Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville, September through May. See npsot.org/kerrville for details.

The Fredericksburg Chapter of NPSOT meets monthly in Fredericksburg. See npsot.org/fredericksburg for details.

Cindy Anderson is a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas (Kerrville Chapter) and the Hill Country Master Gardeners. An enthusiastic (though often frustrated) gardener, she has learned first-hand the value of native plants, and gladly shares reviews of her favorites in this quarterly seasonal column.

**HCMG Monthly Meeting
April 5, 2023
HCYEC**

Call to Order (Please Silence Your Cell Phones)

- Dave called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the membership.

Invocation – Sue Hall delivered the invocation prior to the potluck luncheon.

Welcome/Opening Remarks– Dave Kinneberg welcomed the group and asked for a round of applause for the graduating interns. He also welcomed Molly and Tom (Lorch) who transferred to HCMG from the Abilene area. Molly Richardson has completed her certification to be a HCMG and was presented with her certificate and official name badge.

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

Approval of Minutes from March 1, 2023 Meeting – Melayne Arnold made a motion to approve the minutes from the March meeting. The motion was seconded by Tex Lang.

Treasurer's Report – Rachel Garrison explained line items from the report, specifically the additional expenditures due to purchasing plants for the B&B plant sale. There were no questions from the members.

Business Items

Nominating Committee – Dave Kinneberg said he currently had one person who offered to serve on the Nominating Committee, and he would like others to volunteer as well. The Nominating Committee will be responsible for submitting names to the Executive Committee for the positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer. Dave gave a brief description of the Secretary's duties. Rita

Aliperto has agreed to accept the Special Projects Chair position since Bob Huff has resigned.

Standing Committee Reports

Demonstration Garden – Jackie Skinner thanked the many volunteers who spread mulch at the Demo Garden. She also thanked the helpers who aren't on the Demo Garden committee. The Demo Garden will be open for visitors on sale day. She expressed thanks to Jodi Tippens and her family for clearing the turf and weeds to make way for the Pollinator Meadow. She is still looking for a volunteer to care for the caterpillars in that area. Anyone interested, please see Jackie or Bee Evans. Tom Collins is our expert dealing with pollinators. Jackie brought a card for members' signatures to convey our best wishes to Ernesto at Medina Nursery who recently suffered a stroke.

Research Desk – Anne Brown reported that the interns may start signing up (in VMS) for their training on the Research Desk. Two interns, along with their mentors and a trainer will be allowed to sign up for each session on Tuesdays and Thursdays until training is completed.

Greenhouse/B&B – Anne Brown & Jackie Connelly gave the statuses of their respective committees. There will be 2,071 plants for sale. The prices are \$3 for 4" pot; \$12 for gallon pot; \$15 for geraniums; \$45 Mountain Laurel; \$55 peach trees. HCMGs may purchase their 3 plants on Thursday morning as well as potting soil for \$5 per #40 bag. Anne reminded members to wear their name tags. Interns should refer any questions to MG's. Please bring your wagons (if you have one) on Friday. Anne explained where to park (and where not to). Rachel's husband will set up a time lapse camera on Friday and Saturday. The Sheriff's Department will park a law enforcement vehicle outside the sale as a theft deterrent.

Garden Shed at B&B - Patti Schlessiger is requesting members contact her for Garden Shed items. If we do not get enough items, we may not have a that booth at the sale.

Continued on page 13

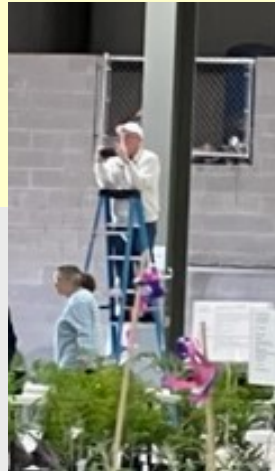
Other Announcements- Dave thanked Bill and Louise Haney for the peppers and tomatoes they brought for the members.

Final Comments – Dave Kinneberg again, congratulated the newly graduated interns on their accomplishment.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
Rita Aliperto,
Secretary

Thank you to all the people who took pictures of our big event for this edition of “Of Leaf & Limb”: Vickie Killeen, Pam Umstead, Patti Schlessiger, Pat Wolters and Dave Garrison on ladder.



Kay Nelson

Grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana

Degree in Horticulture from Texas A&M University

Hill Country Master Gardener

Houston Texas - 42 years experience and owner in a full service commercial landscaping company

where I specialized in Interior Plant Design and Maintenance.

President’s message continued from page 1

She’s the one who lost sleep wondering if everything would work out and, when problems cropped up, she’s the one who found solutions. Thank you, Donna, for a great job!

Three others also deserve thanks for leading important activities this year. And they did a great job too. I am referring, of course, to Anne Brown and Sandy Lewis who took over the greenhouse from Fernando Gonzalez, and Jackie Connelly who took over the B&B sale from Janell Dahms. The 2023 B&B sale was successful because these MG’s stepped up when we needed them.

Many of us took part in the B&B sale: people on the greenhouse and B&B committees, those on the

hospitality and demo garden teams and a bunch of new interns. Special thanks to Bernard Warren who personally contributed over 200 vegetable plants to the sale. As Jackie said in one of her “e-minders,” the B&B sale “is not always about making money. But keeping the mission of Texas Master Gardeners alive and enjoying the company of each other.” Other than the financial comment, I think that is true for everything we do.



That’s All Folks! Greenhouse committee members Janice Walker, Sandy Martin & Sandy Lewis pot Texas Betony, the last of 2066 plants going to this year’s Blooms & Barrels annual sale.

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

**Special thanks to
Judy Beauford for
proofreading**

Photographer
Vickie Killeen

**Submissions to
Pat Wolters, Editor**

Patwolters2865
@hotmail.com

Hill Country Gardeners Get Tips for Successful Landscapes



HCMG Tex Lang was the featured speaker at the latest Butt-Holdsworth Library's Gardening 101 free lecture series. Tex offered his audience suggestions for coping with thin, rocky, alkaline soils and discussed the importance of mulch for water conservation and soil temperature regulation. After explaining the principals of proper plant selection (mature size, water needs, sun requirements, etc.), he previewed some of the plants that will be available at the annual Blooms & Barrels sale.



Greenhouse committee members Anne Brown, Sandy Lewis and Kay Nelson were available to answer sale questions from the audience. 22 people attended the March 25 program. This was our second-most-attended library program of 2023 showing an increased interest in gardening topics as spring arrives in the Texas Hill Country.

Photo credit: Vickie Killeen