

September, 2023

Volume 21 Issue 9

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September 6, 2023

HCOYEC

Meeting 1:00 pm

CEU 2:00 pm

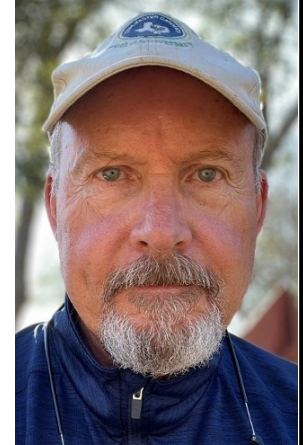
**“Propagation  
 Methods”**

Debbie Lea, MG  
 Bio Page 8



“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**



Our mission as Texas Master Gardeners is to support the AgriLife Extension Service by providing “research-based” information and education to our communities. We are a service organization, and members must contribute at least 25 hours of volunteer time each year to maintain their certification. Considering that we have about 100 members, this equates to a minimum of around 2500 volunteer hours each year. Not surprisingly, we consistently contribute much more than that. For example, in 2022, we donated over 8600 hours!

Some people apply to our training course simply because they want to learn more about growing plants in Hill Country. To be honest, that’s why I signed up. While learning is an important part of being a master gardener - each member must have at least six hours of continuing education each year - the volunteering requirement is much more rigorous.

There are several ways to volunteer, each important in its own way. When requested, we help with the design and training of personnel for local garden projects. The new Mercy Gate Garden is a great example. We don’t provide labor (although we help); we provide information and education. We also maintain our demonstration garden and several “satellite” gardens to show people what can be grown in our tough Hill Country environment.

We give classes and seminars in horticultural topics. I clearly remember when Chris Seifert and Imelda Horne came to my community HOA to teach my neighbors and me about composting. Speaking to a group of interested people, in the library or at an HOA meeting, is a great way to “spread the word.” HCMG also does “home visits” to consult on specific problems. Who would be better than Anne Brown to explain why your live oak looks pathetic? Go on a home visit with her and learn how she handles inquiries.

**Continued on page 4**



## Hill Country Veggies

**By Allen Mace, MG**

Day 436 of Texas Convection Oven 2023: Dear Uncle TapeMeasure, the people are getting restless. The temperatures are still hitting above 100 degrees in the afternoon and still no sign of rain, we're losing them. Dear nephew, create a disturbance in the western gulf to give them short lived hope. Then push two systems off the west coast of Africa and push them out into the mid-Atlantic. This will create the illusion that the convection oven over Texas may soon be pushed out. We can shift the systems north next week and destroy any hope of relief. (Please forgive my parody of C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters). It's been a long hot summer and I've had lots of free time on my hands.

This has not been a very productive summer in my garden. The only thing I have growing now are six tomato plants, and I'm still getting a few tomatoes now and then. I saved seeds from a 2nd generation Cherokee Purple Tomato that I grew this year from some seeds I saved a few years ago. I let the collected seeds ferment a bit too long and I believe that I may have compromised the viability of this seed batch. None the less, I did get one seed to germinate in my test. Next spring, I will plant a few of the 2nd generation seeds and some of the 3rd generation seeds and see what happens. I have been trying different varieties of tomatoes over the years and I now plan to focus on these Cherokee Purple Tomatoes.



Saved Seeds 3rd Generation

I am happy with the wicking pots that I made last year. They seem to be doing well this summer. I have three tomatoes in wicking pots and three tomatoes in large regular pots with large saucers under the pots. Throughout the heat I've noticed a few things. The pots with the saucers need to be watered every day or two. The top soil layer is dry when I go to water and that is to be expected. The lower soil layers tend to be a bit moist so this is indicating that the soil is drawing the water up from the filling of the saucer. This is the wicking concept at work but there is not enough water in the saucer to keep all the soil layers moist. With the wicking pot, it may be three to four days between watering but the top layers of soil are always moist. Both methods are working during this hot summer. I feel that the wicking pots can go longer between times of watering because the water reservoir is larger for the wicking pots than the pots sitting in the saucers. The key to both methods is that the soil pulls moisture up from below and this causes the roots to push down deeper and creates more lateral roots that pulls in nutrients that benefits the plants.



Germination Test

Since we are watering more frequently, don't forget to fertilize a bit more. These plants are stressed right now and need a little more help. Summer is almost over and the Fall season is drawing near.



## Newly Certified Hill Country Master Gardeners



**Above from left:** Mentors Pat and Sandy Corbin, newly certified Bill and Louise Haney, Mentor Jan Sewell, newly certified Tamara Ruby

**Below from left:** President Dave Kinneberg, Mentor Jodi Tippens, newly certified Linda Lockhart, Dave Kinneberg, Mentor Aimee Tennant, newly certified Barbara Green

**More newly certified master gardeners on page 10**

Photo Credit: Pat Wolters







**Jackie Connelly, Linda Proffitt and Jackie Skinner**

## Adieu, Fare Thee Well and Adios Muchacha!

By Jackie Connelly

Join us in bidding best wishes to one of our beloved HCMG family members. **Jackie Skinner** will be relocating to a new home in Willis, Texas. Many of us will remember her in the class of 2014. Since then she has volunteered over 2,960 hours supporting many of our projects. She "served" as president in 2017 and 2018. Jackie was given the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award. But we will also remember her as "serving" as co-chair of our Hospitality Committee with Linda Proffitt. Who can forget those fabulous B&B lunches they treated us to. She also took on the

renovation of our Kerr Demo Garden volunteering over 1,250 hours there. Under her tutelage she helped many new "sprouts" learn the care of native and adaptive plants which do well in the Hill Country. We will miss you Jackie Skinner but so happy to wish you great happiness on your next chapter.

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

We have the research desk. Responding to questions isn't glamorous, but this is one of the primary reasons HCMG was formed twenty years ago. It is a core HCMG function that our agents rely on to meet their objective of serving local communities.

In addition, there are many ways to volunteer to keep HCMG "alive" as an organization. Are you willing to update the website? How about helping the hospitality committee? With advertising? With CEU speakers? By becoming an officer? You don't have to pull weeds and dig in the dirt to help HCMG accomplish its mission.

Whatever your choice, I hope it's something you enjoy, and I thank you for making our communities better places to live.



**Retama Tree blooming in Demonstration Garden August 2023**



## GETTING MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK BY RATOONING SPRING VEGETABLES

Submitted by Dee Dunton

It's the end of June, and my vegetable garden looks rough. The heat and the insects have wreaked havoc on my once beautiful Garden of Eden. This is the perfect time to rejuvenate some of the crops using a technique call ratooning.

In order to produce more fruit in the fall, a pepper with no blooms or fruit can be ratooned in early July. Ratooning is the process of cutting the stem of a plant, causing it to push out new growth and produce another crop, typically in the fall. Ratooning can be done once spring crops have stopped flowering and appear to be done with production for the summer. When compared to a new transplant, a ratooned plant has a very strong root system and does not take nearly as long to produce fruit.



Crops well suited for ratooning include: eggplant, pepper, and okra. I have ratooned my peppers for a few years now, and the fall production after ratooning is very rewarding. If properly done, gardeners can enjoy eggplant, peppers, and okra from May to July and September to the first frost of the year.

Crops should be mowed or pruned to 6 to 8 inches above the soil line. The gardener needs to make sure that a few leaf axils are left to provide the plant with photosynthetic capabilities.

Once the plants are cut, gardeners will want to fertilize with a fertilizer that has a 1:2 ratio of nitrogen to potassium, which will encourage new growth and stimulate flower production.

Examples of fertilizers with a 1:2 ratio include: 4-0-8, 5-0-10, or 10-0-20. Depending on the type of fertilizer used, 2 to 3 pounds of these products should be used per 100 feet of row in a banded

application. After fertilization, plants should be watered frequently, as this will be the hottest part of the summer. In about 4 to 6 weeks, the ratooned plants will begin producing fruit that can be enjoyed by gardeners up until the first frost of the season.

Happy ratooning!

References:

2019 Southeastern U.S. Vegetable Crop Handbook. Page 55. <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/southeastern-us-vegetable-crop-handbook>

If this document didn't answer your questions, please contact HGIC at [hgic@clemson.edu](mailto:hgic@clemson.edu) or 1-888-656-9988.

Author: Zack Snipes, Horticulture Program Team, Beaufort and Charleston County, Clemson Extension

## 2023 Texas Drought

*Taken from an article in the San Antonio Express News August 11, 2023*

The latest drought statement for South Central Texas from the National Weather Service, issued in late July, reported a "noticeable drop of streamflows" due to lack of rainfall and surface evaporation. "Much of the streamflow across the area is in the less than 10th percentile for this time of year," the statement said. The Guadalupe River is a prime example of that low water flow and the wider impact it is having. The Guadalupe is the water source for Canyon Lake; the reservoir was created by damming the river, which runs from Kerr County to the Gulf of Mexico. But the river has run dry above Canyon Dam. According to the U.S. Geological Survey's river gauge near Spring Branch, the streamflow has been zero since June 29. In Kerrville, the Guadalupe River is flowing at less than 2 cubic feet per second. By the time it reaches Comfort, about 20 miles away, that's dropped to zero, according to the USGS gauges.

Across the state, drought conditions are getting worse. About 86 percent of the state is abnormally dry or worse, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, up from 75 percent in mid-July. More than one-third of Texas is in severe, extreme or exceptional drought, including all of Bexar, Kendall, Hays and Comal counties.

And the end isn't in sight yet.

The low water levels and stream flows this summer are the result of more than just the recent dry conditions. The region is in its third year of drought, and the effects have compounded over time. Three years of La Niña — the climate pattern that pushes the jet stream north and tends to result in drought in the Southern United States — has led to the dry riverbeds and lakes.

Experts say that with a shift to the El Niño climate pattern, there is some hope for more rain in the fall. The climate pattern shifts the Pacific jet stream south and east, typically resulting in wetter and cooler weather in Texas. After three years of La Niña patterns, "there's hope that we'll have a wetter-than-normal fall with the development of El Niño," Mace said. There are sometimes normal or dryer El Niño years, he said, "but there's a 70 to 80 percent chance that we'll have a wetter-than-normal fall and spring." He's also got his eye on the Atlantic hurricane season.

Overall, the chances of rainfall in the Hill Country pulling the region out of drought are low, he said. Tools from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration show it would take 17 inches of rain by the end of the year to get out of drought conditions, and there's just a 3.4% chance of that happening, he said. Even that amount of rain wouldn't mean the aquifer and reservoirs would be full, Mace said.

Drought isn't new for the Hill Country, but the region's population boom in recent years has changed the calculus, said Katherine Romans, director of the Hill Country Alliance, an environmental advocacy organization. The population of the Hill Country during the 1950s, the state's "drought of record," was about 800,000. Today, more than 3.5 million people live in the region. That's more people pulling water from the ground and from reservoirs and rivers; more straws in the cup.



## **Our Neighborhood Meteorologist** **By Vickie Killeen, MG**

How hot is it? Well, up at The Summit we just look at the squirrel to tell. It's **HOT!**

A neighbor circulated these pictures to make us laugh while we shelter indoors to escape the dry heat. He says the squirrel is “splooting” – lying in a spread-eagle prone posture. It is typically performed by four-legged mammals such as dogs and squirrels when they wish to relax or cool down. It is also known as “frogging” or “pancaking”.





## Education Committee Plans 2023 MG Class



Clockwise from left:

- Jackie Connelly
- Janice Walker
- Sheridan Stringer
- Anne Brown
- Tara Ruby
- Linda Lockhart
- Rae Raiford
- Imelda Horne
- Rachel Garrison
- Dave Kinneberg
- Allen Mace
- Nina Wagner
- Connie Townsend  
Chair,
- Donna Bellis

Photo Credit:  
Pat Wolters



**Bio**

**Debbie  
Lea, MG**

I retired in 2016 after a more than 36 year career as a registered nurse. My husband and I live on a ranch in Mountain Home. I inherited a love of gardening from my Mother and Grandmother, who were vegetable and flower gardeners. I became a Master Gardener in 2017. I especially enjoyed the propagation class. When the opportunity presented itself this past year, I attended the Propagation Specialist Class, in Ft. Worth. My other interests include quilting, travel, “glamping”, spending time with and hosting family and friends at our ranch.

## Texas Master Gardener Conferences 2024 and 2025!

<p><b>2024</b></p> <p>April 22-24, 2024</p> <p>Texas Master Gardener State Virtual Conference</p> <p><i>"Blooming Together"</i></p> <p>Mark your calendars and plan to attend this educational and inspiring gardening extravaganza!</p> <p><b>TEXAS</b> MASTER GARDENER TEXAS A&amp;M AGRILIFE EXTENSION</p>	<p><b>2025</b></p> <p>August 25-28, 2025</p> <p>International Master Gardener Virtual Conference</p> <p><i>"There is No Planet B"</i></p> <p>The Texas Master Gardener Program has been selected to host the next International Conference!</p> <p><b>TEXAS A&amp;M</b> <b>AGRI LIFE</b> EXTENSION</p>
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Save the Dates!



**Hill Country Master Gardeners  
Monthly Meeting  
August 2, 2023  
HCYEC**

**Call to Order**

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

**Invocation** – Patti Schlessiger asked everyone to search for ColdSpringGardenClub.org and recite the Gardener’s Prayer as a group. She felt the message resonates better if the words are shared aloud.

**Welcome/Opening Remarks** – Dave Kinneberg welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

**Approval of Minutes from July 5, 2023, Meeting** – Melayne Arnold moved the minutes should be approved. Kay Nelson seconded the motion.

**Treasurer’s Report** – Dave Kinneberg provided the Treasurer’s report in Rachel’s absence. He said there was nothing out of the ordinary to report here. The high KPUB bill was due to an electrical issue in one of the greenhouses. The thermostat issue and signage will be addressed soon.

**Welcome new Members!** Dave welcomed seven new interns who became Master Gardeners, stating they are the lifeblood of the organization - (Barbara Green, Bill and Louise Haney, Linda Lockhart, Meta Pugh, Tamara Ruby and Susan Thomas). Each new MG and their mentors took center stage for certificate and badge presentation as well as a photo.

**Standing Committee Reports**

**Education** – In Donna’s place, Pat Wolters informed the group about an upcoming meeting.

**Demo Garden** – Jackie Skinner announced that the Demo Garden will hold a Fall Festival on October 21st. There will be a garden tour, refreshments,

classroom training. More details will follow. Jackie was given a standing ovation for her contributions to the Demo Garden and HCMGs. Tex Lang will work on publicity for the event. Pam Umstead will use the details of the event in her radio spots.

**Other Announcements**

**Cultivar Farms Dedication** – Michael Bell explained the history of Cultivar Farms and how, in 2015, Judy Beauford and Shirley Smith gave the project a makeover using several hundred volunteer hours. Both ladies, HCMGs on leave-of-absences, were present at the meeting today and were recognized by the group as Michael explained how the garden was now renamed The Judy Beauford and Shirley Smith Cultivar Farm.

**River Clean-Up** – Dave spoke about the River Clean-Up event and thanked those who participated. Anne reported that we made 91 contacts. Dave highly recommends folks to volunteer next year as he said it was a lot of fun.

**Emergency Preparedness Expo** – Mike Morris was invited by the county to provide training for this expo. MGs will take part in the event; the subjects are growing food at home and being fire-wise. The event will be held September 30th 9am-4pm, free of charge. Volunteers are needed to work at the booth.

**October Field Trip** – Dave Kinneberg is working on the details of a field trip after our October general meeting either at the Medina Nursery or Natives of Texas or both. Upon listening to discussions, Dave will check into getting a venue for our meeting, lunch and a nursery tour. Patti Schlessiger offered to help organize the event.

**Non-Profit Week** – will be held August 21 – 25. Pam Umstead said there will be free radio announcements for non-profit organizations.

**Final Comments** – Dave Kinneberg mentioned the TX MG Director’s meeting on Friday at 9am. Anyone can attend (via ZOOM).

*Continued on page 10*

**Minutes continued from page 9**

Jackie Connelly thanked Bill Haney for all his hard work on the website. You can now register online for the 2024 classes. Please let your friends and family know.

A question arose about ordering Logo Wear. Those interested can contact Melayne. She will contact the vendor about smaller orders. She is also working out details on a potential new vendor.

Check the latest eMinder for details on Cultivate training (via ZOOM) which will be held September 8th & 9th. The topics are Earth Friendly Gardening and Landscaping.

Ray Tiemann reported that the Homesteading Seminar had 46 students registered. Ray brought a plant as a door prize. Judy Beauford won.

Adjournment  
 Respectfully submitted, Rita Aliperto, Secretary

**Next Meeting: September 6, 2023 HCYEC**

Native Plants and  
 Native Birds: A  
 Relationship Worth  
 Nurturing.

Patsy Inglet



**Newly Certified Hill Country Master Gardeners**



President Dave Kinneberg, Mentor Chris Seifert, newly certified Susan Thomas, Mentor Pat Wolters and newly certified Meta Pugh at HCMG Meeting



**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  
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*Photographer*  
Vickie Killeen

Submissions to  
Pat Wolters, Editor

Patwolters2865  
@hotmail.com

IN LOVING MEMORY OF



**The Founders Tree**

**1800s—2023**

**Kerrville, Texas**