

January 2018
Volume 16, Issue 1

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**HCMG will meet on
January 3, 2018**

**Location:
AgriLife Building Classroom**

**Noon - Lunch
1:00 - Meeting
2:00 - Program
(see page 2 for description)**



**TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION**

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

HCMG's Volunteers of the Year – 2017

Two members provided outstanding service this past year. Raeann Reid (left) and Pam Umstead (right) received the top honors at the annual Christmas luncheon. Each received an



inscribed plaque and gift certificates to Plant Haus II while Vice President Wil Rolfe (center) displays the office plaque inscribed with their names. This award is presented to the member with the most distinguished year of service to the HCMG organization and the communities it serves. Nominations for Volunteer of the Year are submitted by members, and the winner is selected by the Executive Committee.

President's Volunteer Service Award –Gold



With more than 500 hours of volunteer service, Jackie Skinner, Anne Brown and Jackie Connelly are our "Golden Girls". They received gold service pins, letters of congratulation signed by the President of the

United States, and a certificate of appreciation. Included in the presentation but not at the program was Debra Rosario.

Photos by Vickie Killeen

HCMG 2018, Calendar of Events prepared by Raeann Reid

Attendance at events other than MG meetings is optional. We list events for those wishing to attend other educational offerings, and limit events to those that would earn our members CEUs. Call to confirm event.

January 2, NPSOT Boerne, 6:30 p.m. social, followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Susan Sander, Naturalist, RNC, will present "What Birds Have Taught Me About Plants." Cibolo Nature Center Auditorium. Visitors welcome.

January 3, HCMG, 1:00 p.m. business meeting, 2:00 p.m. Member/Specialist Panel Discussion. By December 29, send questions and "problem photos" to rbiehle@gmail.com. Kerr County TAMU AgriLife Extension Office. HCMGs and interns.

January 6, Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center, 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Cathy Downs, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist, will present the hands-on class "Milkweed Propagation 101," including learning about local milkweeds. Class limited to 40. To register, contact Nancy Person at 210.913.2443 or nancykperson@gmail.com. Tatsch House, Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park. Free and open to the public.

January 9, NPSOT Kerrville, 1:30 p.m. Scott Whitener, Park Supt, South Llano River State Park, will present "Getting to know South Llano State Park." Riverside Nature Center. Visitors welcome.

January 10, Rose Garden Club of Medina, 2:00 p.m. Debbie Hopkins, club member and avid birder for 35 years, will present Backyard Birding in Medina. Medina Community Center. Visitors welcome.

January 16, Hunt Garden Club, 10:00 a.m. Keri Wilt, a descendant of the author of the classic Children's book, Inside the Secret Garden, will bring 19th century Britain to 21st century Hunt through historical family links. Hunt United Methodist Church. Visitors Welcome.

January 16, Kerr County Cactus & Succulent Society, 7:00 p.m. Program to be announced, Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library. Confirm date & time. Visitors welcome.

January 23, NPSOT Fredericksburg, 6:30 p.m. social, followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Hans Landel, Invasive Species Program Coordinator, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, will

present "Combating Invasive Species Affecting Your Native Habitat." Memorial Presbyterian Church. Visitors welcome.

February 2, Gillespie County TAMU AgriLife Extension Service, Registration 8:30 a.m., programs 9:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. AgriLife, assisted by Hill Country Master Gardeners, will present "Plantastic Mini Vegetable Gardening Seminar." \$20 pre-register, \$25 at door. See the eMinder for more details. Contact Beth McMahon at Elizabeth.McMahon@ag.tamu.edu to register. Gillespie County Farm Bureau Building. Open to the public.

February 6, HCMG Training, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Class orientation and Backyard Wildlife, strategies to encourage beneficial and discourage unwanted wildlife. Hill Country Youth Event Center. Trainees, HCMGs and interns.

February 7, HCMG, 1:00 p.m. business meeting, 2:00 p.m. Dr. Jimmy Black, grower and propagator of succulents, will present "Introducing Cacti and Other Succulents into Your Landscape, Hill Country Youth Event Center. HCMGs, interns and trainees.

February 8, HCMG Training, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Soils of the Hill Country, Composting, Soil Amendments. Hill Country Youth Event Center. Trainees, HCMGs and interns.

Addresses for Events Listed Above

Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville
Cibolo Nature Center Auditorium, 140 City Park Road, Boerne
Gillespie County Farm Bureau Building, 237 Equestrian Drive, Fredericksburg
Hill Country Youth Event Center, 3785 Highway 27, Kerrville
Hunt United Methodist Church, 120 Merritt Road, Hunt
Kerr County TAMU AgriLife Extension Office, 3655 Highway 27, Kerrville
Medina Community Center, 13857 State Hwy 16N, Medina
Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 North Milam Street, Fredericksburg
Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street, Kerrville
Tatsch House, Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park, 3 miles south of downtown Fredericksburg on SH 16



Sharing the Christmas Spirit

Photo by Vickie Killeen

From left,
Allen Noah,
Mike Weberpal,
Kerry Brittain,
Duane Robinson,
Jerry Clark,
Jerry
Christensen,
Wil Rolfe and
Lloyd Kneese.



Hill Country Veggies

January 2018
By Allen Mace

A few weeks ago we had, as some have called it, The Blizzard of 2017. I didn't have any frost on pumpkins, but there was snow on my cabbage. Well, to be honest, there was not much snow at my house, it sort of went around me. I guess we have to make the most of it when we can. Those of you from up north won't understand but we seldom see snow here. We do seem to get ice



from time to time. My grandfather was originally from Ohio and as the story goes, when he retired from the military, he tied a snow shovel to the front of his car and drove south until someone asked him what that shovel was used for? He settled in San Antonio Texas. All in all, this has been a mild winter so far. I've heard that some folks were still getting tomatoes as of a few weeks ago. As a kid, we used to keep blankets and sheets ready to cover plants at night. If the temperature stays above freezing, most vegetable can survive. Cooler weather though, tends to slow down production. That's why I abandon my warm season crops and switch to those that can handle the cooler temperatures. The other day I was poking around one of my beds and found a volunteer Lamb's



Lamb's Quarter

Quarter growing at the base of a kale plant. I'm not sure how cold hardy Lamb's Quarter is, but I'll leave it alone and find



Snowy Cabbage

out. The cabbage, kale and Swiss chard have matured and are ready to harvest. I think I will be shutting things down until the spring. This will be a good time to plant some rye grass or clover in the beds. You should allow these cover crops to grow a few inches and then turn them back under into the soil. You should be able to do this two, maybe three time before spring. This will help to build up you soil and work nutrients back into the soil in preparation for spring. Every winter, when things slow down a bit, I try to go through a few of the different books I've collected over the years. I'm notorious for buying books as I find them, then putting them on the shelf for later. The other day I was rummaging through my library and found a book titled "The Mix & Match Guide to Companion Planting" by Josie Jeffery. This should dovetail nicely with one of my favorite books, "Carrot's Love Tomatoes", which I've had, and used for over twenty years. Companion planting has been around for a long time. The concept is simple. By matching different plants together in the same area, they help each other. Growing up, we always planted flowers in among the vegetables to help attract pollinators to the garden. There are some plants that will draw nutrients up through the soil, allowing other plants to utilize these nutrients that they normally couldn't access on their own. Other plants will attract insects that might be harmful to the vegetables you're growing. Yes, this is a slow time of year for growing vegetables, but it's a good time to educate, reflect and prepare for the seasons to come.



New Book

Cool-Season Peas by Patty G. Leander

Texans like to kick off the New Year with a bowl of black-eyed peas but there is another kind of pea on the mind of gardeners this time of year: sugar snap, snow peas and garden peas. These three types of peas (*Pisum sativum*) require cool weather for optimum growth and should be planted in late winter for a successful spring crop.

Peas, in one form or another, have been in cultivation around the world for thousands of years, but the sugar snap pea that we enjoy today is American-made, thanks to a plant breeder named Calvin Lamborn of Idaho. In the 1970's he crossed a garden pea with a snow pea, resulting in a tender pea with a sweet, edible pod. This new pea, called 'Sugar Snap', was introduced to the public in 1979, and has been a sensation ever since. It is a vining variety that can reach 5-7 feet. 'Super Sugar Snap' is an improved version with resistance to powdery mildew and 'Amish Snap' is a variety that has reportedly been grown in Amish communities long enough to be considered an heirloom. All are vigorous vining varieties of plump and flavorful edible-podded peas, maturing in 65-70 days.

Bush varieties of sugar snap peas grow only 24-36" tall and begin producing slightly earlier than the vining types. A few sugar snap varieties that perform well in Texas include 'Cascadia' (58-60 days to maturity), 'Sugar Ann' (58 days), 'Sugar Daddy' (60 days) and 'Sugar Sprint' (55-58 days). If English peas are more to your liking try the heirloom varieties 'Wando' (68 days) or 'Little Marvel' (62 days). A more recent introduction is 'Mr. Big', an All-American Selection winner that grows 5-6 feet and produces large pods filled with 8 to 10 plump green peas. It starts producing about 60 days after sowing seed.

Snow peas are grown for their flat edible pods. If the peas inside are allowed to develop they will taste starchy and the pod will be tough. 'Dwarf Grey Sugar' (60 days), 'Oregon Sugar Pod' (62 days), and 'Mammoth Melting Sugar' (65 days), produce crisp pods perfect for stir-fries, salads or dips. 'Dwarf Grey Sugar' produces delicate purple blooms and is often sown close together and harvested in only 10-12 days for pea shoots that can be added to salads, omelets, sandwiches and wraps.

Sugar snap peas can be eaten at any stage of development. The entire pod is edible when the peas inside are small and immature. Fresh, crunchy pods can be served with dip, added to salads, sautéed or roasted but most often are eaten while standing in the garden. Peas that are allowed to fully mature can be shelled and prepared like any garden pea, by simmering in a small pot of water just until tender.



'Cascadia' peas ready for harvest



To harvest pods: hold the vine in one hand and pull off the pod with the other



'Mr. Big' lives up to his name

Cool-Season Peas by Patty G. Leander

Peas can be a challenge to grow because they are particular about the weather and must be planted during a short window of opportunity. Too hot and they will wither away, too wet and they succumb to powdery mildew, too cold and they will drop their blooms and potential pods. In Central Texas we should plant peas in late January or early February. This allows the plants to grow and mature in cool weather. The harvest generally takes place in March and April and the plants tend to peter out by May if not before.

Plant the seed 1-1½" deep and 3-4" apart. Planting after a rain is ideal, but if you are not so lucky be sure to irrigate a day or two before planting so the soil will be moist and ready to receive seed. Bush type varieties that grow 24-30" are considered self-supporting, but I find that they are easier to tend and easier to harvest if given some kind of support. They will also get better air circulation (therefore less prone to disease) if grown upright and off the ground. Try using string or chicken wire tied between stakes or insert pruned branches next to the plants for support. The tall, vining varieties, like 'Super Sugar Snap', must have sturdy support and should be planted at the base of a tall tomato cage, a fence or a trellis. Once your peas start producing, harvest them frequently for peak quality and to encourage more production. And be sure to use two hands when harvesting or you could easily pull up an entire vine (been there, done that). Your home-grown peas that travel from garden to kitchen in mere minutes will look better, taste better and cost less than any fresh sugar snap pea that you can buy at a grocery store – yet another reason to grow-your-own!



Some peas have strings so be sure to snap the end and peel the strings off before cooking



The lovely purple blooms of 'Dwarf Grey Sugar'



Harvest snow peas before the pods start to plump up

Patty G. Leander is a Master Gardener and Contributing Editor for *Texas Gardener Magazine*. She lives and gardens in Austin.



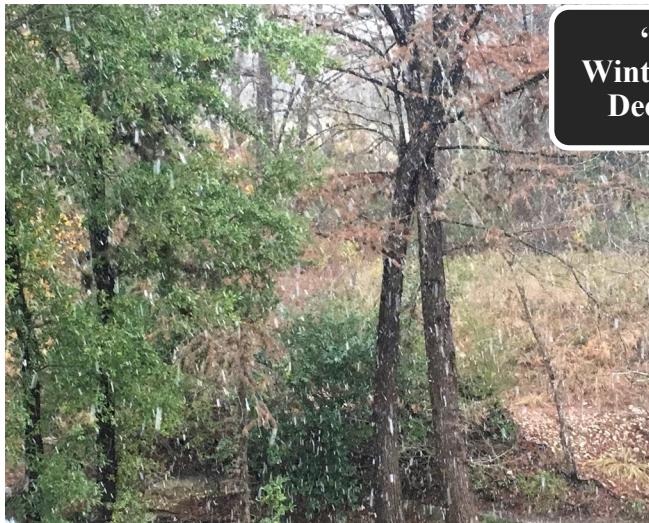
Kerrville

Photo by Vickie Killeen



Boerne

Photo by Rachel Garrison



Center Point

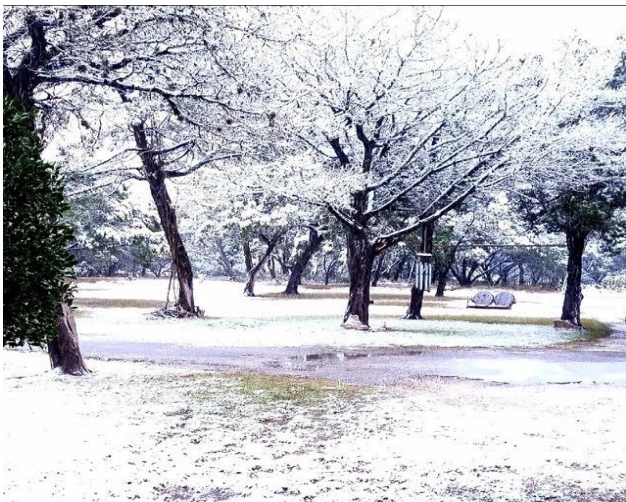
Photo by Debbie Bacon

**"Walkin in a
Winter Wonderland"
December 7, 2017**



Boerne

Photo by Terry Lashley



Medina Mountain

Photo by Kara Grant



Turtle Creek

Photo by Pat Wolters



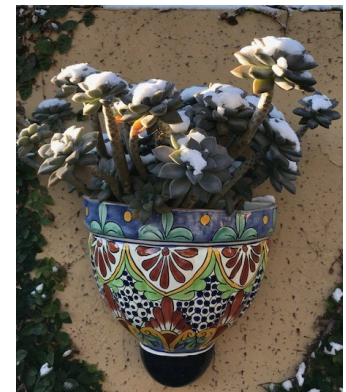
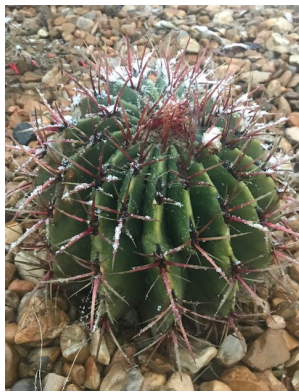
Gulf Muhly Grasses
Photo by Vickie Killeen



Patio Chair
Photo by Pam Umstead



Okra Bloom
Photo by Janice Walker



Cactus, Flowers and Succulents in the Snow Photos by Pam Umstead



Texas Red Oaks and Amaryllis Photos by Vickie Killeen



Grasses Photo by Pam Umstead

Christmas Party at Riverhills



Carol Brinkman, Kathie Guenther, Valerie Fishell, Rose Marie Mazanke, Barbara Banks, Nancy Person, Loes Williams and Peggy Benson



Carol Hagemeyer, Leigh Thomas, Sue Hall, Allen Noah, Shirley Smith, Judy Beauford, Rachel Garrison and Jan Grimes

President's Volunteer Service Award—Silver

Recipients of the Silver Award are Lloyd Kneese, Pam Umstead, Shirley Smith and Judy Beauford. All met the requirement of 250-499 hours of service. The President's Volunteer Service Awards is a national program established to honor volunteers throughout the country.

Special thanks to Vickie Killeen for taking all of the Christmas party and award pictures and to Jackie Connelly for making sure we got the names and awards right!





Kim Keese, Lindsey Forster, Jerry Christensen, Dakota Moyers, Roy Walston and Beth McMahon



Dusty Gilliam, Kathy Leonard, Debbie Lea, Kim Courtright, Brenda Heinsohn, Shawn Richard & Patty Schlessiger



Dee Dunton, Pam Umstead, Bernadell Larson, Duane Robinson, Jackie Connelly, Melayne Arnold and Pat McCormick



Lydia Jones, Pat Wolters, Carol Edwards, Jerry Clark, Terrie Clark, Mimi Stidham & Jane Rackley



Debra Foley, Janice Walker, Anne Brown, Caryl Hartman, Mike Weberpal & Liz Althaus



Debbie Bacon, Linda Proffitt, Patty Zohlen, Wil Rolfe, Jackie Skinner, Kerry Brittain, Lloyd Kneese & Raeann Reid

More Well Deserved Awards for Master Gardeners



Photo
Credit:
Vickie
Killeen



Above: Recipients of the **10 Years of Service Milestone Awards** are, from left, Kathie Guenther and Carol Brinkman. Carolyn Nall, who also earned the 10 Years of Service Award was not at the event. **5 Years of Service Milestone Awards** were announced for Carl Luckenback and Debra Rosaria, who were not in attendance. Mentor Sue Hall, left, congratulates intern Brenda Heinsohn who has completed 50 volunteer hours and earned her certification as a Hill Country Master Gardener. A new **Perfect Attendance Award** was presented this year recognizing the member who has attended every membership meeting of 2017. President Jackie Skinner, left, and Treasurer Jackie Connelly, right, present the award to Vice President Wil Rolfe, now known as "Mr. Perfect".



President's Volunteer Service Award-Bronze.

A total of 26 HCMG each volunteered 100-249 hours of community service during the past year.

(Front row) Pat Wolters, Linda Proffitt, Dusty Gilliam, Caryl Hartman, Dee Dunton, Carol Edwards, Janice Walker, Kim Courtright and Lydia Jones.

(Back row) Wil Rolfe, Vickie Killeen, Carol Hagemeyer, Duane Robinson, Sue Hall, Melayne Arnold, Debra Foley, Patti Schlessiger & Raeann Reid. Not pictured: Debbie Bass, Terry Lashley, Sandy Lewis, Carolyn Nall, Allen Noah, Chris Seifert, Jim Wilhite and Patty Zohlen.

Praise continues for the Texas Master Gardeners Propagation Specialist Workshop

Dear Duane Robinson:

I would like to express my deep gratitude for working me into your Propagation Specialist Class. I enjoyed it tremendously.

Learning new propagating techniques and developing good teaching skills makes me excited to extend these resources to others.

The presentations and unique hands on opportunities were not only fun but extremely informative and well received. I think my favorite part was tomato grafting.... or maybe the simple and economical ways to grow herbs... but I loved the egg shell idea, and the fig tree method was amazing... oh heck – I loved it all!

Please extend a word of thanks to the group! They all worked so hard and were very friendly . What a great team! And need I say – Thomas (Leroy) was amazing.

Sincerely,
Sandy S – Lavaca County Master Gardeners



Glory Community Garden

Gardeners,
friends, and
neighbors
decorated the
garden this
morning –
including this tree
adorned with
veggies!

Photo Credit:
Pam Umstead



Hill Country Master Gardeners Monthly Program and Business Meeting December 6, 2017



“Oh, the weather outside is frightful...” Yes, we always need rain. But, on our party day? Kathie Guenther, Dusty Gilliam and Caryl Hartman are true Hill Country gardeners...welcoming every precious drop with huge smiles!
Photo by Vickie Killeen

The monthly business meeting was held at the Riverhills Country Club in conjunction with the yearly Christmas luncheon. 40+ members were present. President, Jackie Skinner, called the meeting to order at 12:30. Brenda Heinsohn led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was given by Patty Zohlen. Quorum was verified.

Treasurer's Report was given by Jackie Connelly and was approved. Melayne Arnold moved to accept the November meeting minutes and Caroll Edwards seconded and the motion carried.

Old Business - None
New Business - None

Announcements

- Beth McMahon announced the upcoming “Mini Garden Seminar” on February 2 from 9 am until 12:15 with several basic vegetable gardening topics. Volunteers will be needed and encouraged to contact Beth.
- Dues and Volunteer Agreement Forms due December 31st.
- 2017 Graduate Certification was given to Brenda Heinsohn.
- Thank You Note from Carla Shuste, Juvenile

Detention Center, was read.

- Acknowledgement letter from Chris Siefert detailing the contributions of Kim Courtright, Debbie Lea and Shawn Richard to the Glory Community Garden programs.
- January Meeting to be Held at Extension Office Classroom
- Special Projects Coordinators Meeting will be held Wednesday, January 3, 11:30 a.m. in the Extension Office Classroom.
- January Training Classes are as follows:
 - New Computer for A/V Equipment – Tuesday, January 9, 10-12 am, Extension Classroom
 - Power Point – Tuesday, January 9, 1-5 p.m., Extension Classroom
- President's Volunteer Award Pins:
 - 26 Bronze pins
 - 4 Silver pins
 - 4 Gold pins
- Presentation of HCMG Milestone Awards
 - 3 - 10 year pins and 2 - 5 year pins
- Presentation of HCMG Volunteer of the Year Award – Joint award winners —
Raeanne Reid and Pam Umstead

Today's Meeting and Fellowship = 2 Volunteer Hours. Adjournment: 2:30 pm

Respectfully submitted, Lydia Jones, Secretary



Photo by Kathy Lewis

**Hill Country
Master Gardeners**

**2018
Executive Committee**

Jackie Skinner
President

Wil Rolfe
Vice President

Patti Schlessiger
Secretary

Bernadell Larson
Treasurer

Debra Rosario
Ex-officio Advisor

Roy Walston
C.E.A. Advisor

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

Newsletter & Website

Pat Wolters
Newsletter Editor

Patti Schlessiger
Associate Newsletter Editor

**Special thanks to
Judy Beauford for
proofreading**

Raeann Reid
Event Page Editor

Debra Rosario
Webmaster

Diane Boerner
Web Assistant

Submissions to

Newsletter.editor.hcmg@
gmail.com

Hill Country District Pecan Show



Master Gardeners assisted the Kerr County AgriLife employees in picking pecans. Pictured above are Kara Grant, Jackie Connelly, Dr. Larry Stein, Dakota Moyers, Roy Walston, Anne Brown and Janice Walker.

Below: Dr. Larry Stein, Lindsey Forster, Dakota Moyers and Roy Walston.

Photo by Patti Schlessiger

