

November, 2019

Volume 17, Issue 11

President's Message	1
Continuing Education	2
Hill Country Veggies	3
Nolina Texana	4
MGs at RNC	5
Certificates Awarded	6
Nolina Texana continued	7
History of Farm to Table	8
Minutes	9
Donation in Memory of former member	10

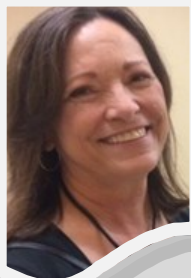
HCMG will meet on  
November 6, 2019  
at  
1:00 - Business Meeting  
2:00 - CEU Program

**Attracting Birds with  
Native Plants**  
presented by Jan Wrede  
and Rufus Stephens

Details found on page 6



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".



Rachel Garrison

### President's Message

***"In November, the smell of food is different. It is an orange smell. A squash and pumpkin smell. It tastes like cinnamon and can fill up a house in the morning, can pull everyone from bed in a fog. Food is better in November than any other time of the year." --Cynthia Rylant, author of children's books***

With November on the horizon, I start thinking about holiday foods and activities. I truly enjoy eating the traditional Thanksgiving turkey, but, as someone interested in plants, I also look forward to pumpkin season. Beautiful displays of pumpkins and other interesting winter squashes are wonderful eye candy. Pumpkin pie, Butternut squash risotto or soup, and baked Acorn squash, are all so delicious!

While doing some Internet pumpkin research, I was surprised to find that according to the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center, Texas is among the top pumpkin producing states in the US. 1.5 billion pounds of usable pumpkins were produced in the US in 2018. That's a lot of pie!

You may not have heard of Floydada, Texas, a town of less than 3,000 inhabitants located northeast of Lubbock. Known as Pumpkin Capital, USA, this small town produces about 1600 acres of pumpkins annually. The town is 3,000 feet above sea level. With daytime highs in the low 90's in July, nights in the mid 60's, and low humidity, the conditions are ideal for growing pumpkins, gourds, and squash. It is too late this year to attend the annual Punkin Days celebration held mid October, but you might want to put it on your 2020 calendar. The celebration includes contests for pumpkin carving, decorating, rolling, and seed spitting.

If you don't want to travel to Floydada or get your pumpkin from a can, you might try growing some. Plant pumpkin seeds in the summer to enjoy a late October, November harvest. Varieties that will do well in the Hill Country are limited since we don't enjoy cool summer nights. Smaller varieties are better suited to our temperatures. They also need well-draining soil. Pumpkins need full sun and plenty of space, as they don't like to be crowded---- not a problem for some of us. Bee activity will help transfer pollen from male to female flowers. Common pumpkin pests include squash bugs, stink bugs, and other pests common to melons and cucumbers. Mulch will keep fruit from making direct contact with the soil and also help control weeds.



***Continued on page 6***

### **HCMG 2019 Continuing Education Opportunities prepared by Raeann Reid**

*This list is for those wishing to attend educational offerings in addition to those offered by Hill Country Master Gardeners.*

**November 5, 6:30 p.m.** social, followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m., NPSOT Boerne. Dr. Norma Fowler, plant ecologist and professor in the Department of Integrative Biology at UT Austin, will present "Central Texas Savannas: Fire, Grazing and Invasive Species." Cibolo Nature Center Auditorium, 140 City Park Rd, Boerne. Visitors welcome.

**November 6, 12:00 p.m.** networking potluck lunch, 1:00 p.m. business meeting, 2:00 p.m., CE program, HCMG. Jan Wrede, author and former Director of Education at the Cibolo Nature, and Rufus Stephens, retired wildlife biologist with Texas Parks and Wildlife, will present "Attracting Birds with Native Plants." Two books, authored by the speakers, will be available for purchase at the meeting: Attracting Birds in the Texas Hill Country (\$40) and Trees, Shrubs and Vines of the Texas Hill Country (\$25). Cash and checks only. Hill Country Youth Event Center, 3785 Hwy 27, KRVL. HCMGs, interns.

**November 12, 1:00 p.m.** social, followed by the meeting at 1:30 p.m., NPSOT Kerrville. Matt Thurlow, arborist and Assistant to Director of Building and Grounds at Riverside Nature Center, will present a program on proper tree trimming. Half the program will be inside and half will be outside demonstrations. Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St, KRVL. Visitors welcome.

**November 13, 2:00 p.m.,** Rose Garden Club of Medina. Johnny Arredondo, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department wildlife biologist for Kerr, Bandera and Real counties will discuss the services he offers to these counties. Medina Community Center, 13857 State Hwy 16N, Medina. Visitors welcome.

**November 19, 10:00 a.m.,** Hunt Garden Club. Genie Strickland of Love Creek Orchards will present "Apple Trees – The Tasty Reward. She will share her knowledge of purchasing the right tree and explain how and where to plant.. Hunt United Methodist Church, 120 Merritt Road, Hunt. Visitors Welcome.

**November 19, 10:30 a.m.** Riverside Nature Center Association. As part of its NEd talk series, writer/photographer Sheryl Smith-Rogers will present "Central Texas Spiders." Riverside Nature Center.

**NPSOT Fredericksburg. Fall hiatus.**

### **Tree Care Seminar a Great Success**

On October 12, the meeting room at the Hill Country Youth Event Center was packed with participants eager to learn about how to care for trees in their landscape. Hill Country Master Gardeners, in conjunction with Kerr County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, presented the public program, Tree Care in the Texas Hill Country. Speakers included Dr. David Appel, Texas A&M professor of Plant Pathology and Microbiology; Sheila McBride, Lead Diagnostician, Texas Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab at Texas A&M; and Erin Davis, Staff Forester, Texas A&M Forest Service.

A variety of topics on the benefits and identification of trees, problems, successes, and general care of our local trees were discussed. The day concluded with a visit to the grounds of the VA Hospital in Kerrville for a demonstration of two types of injection treatment for Oak Wilt disease. The benefits and challenges of each was discussed.

"The program was such a success, we will consider hosting it again," said HCMG Public Program Committee chair, Rev. Ray Tiemann. HCMG would like to thank Kerr County Texas AgriLife Extension Agent, Roy Walston, for his help in arranging the public program and Jake Williamson and his crew at the HCYEC for helping make this event successful.

**Dr. David Appel, pictured in the ball cap and white Texas A&M sweatshirt, explains the hybrid procedure for injecting a tree to treat Oak Wilt disease.**



Write up: Jackie Connelly; Photo Credit: Anne Brown





## Hill Country Veggies

By Allen Mace

This year is flying by, we'll be into the Holiday Season before we know it. I'm finished with the tomato trial and I will be writing down my summery soon as to what was learned. I collected seeds from the two heirloom varieties, Cherokee Purple

and Arkansas Traveler. After collecting and processing both groups of seeds, I did a germination test on both groups. Both groups of seed were viable and I have two of the Cherokee Purple seedlings ready to be planted. This is not a good time of year to be planting tomato seedlings, but I'm going to try and nurture them into late fall and early winter. I'll have to cover them when we start having light freezes. Maybe I'll have fresh tomatoes for Thanksgiving.

I've been a bit lazy this fall and have not planted any fall vegetables. Its OK to take a break, I guess this year will be mine. Ill just clean up the gardens from this summer and see where I'm at come spring. In the back of my mind I have a plan for a greenhouse and a whole new garden set up. Not sure if I'll accomplish it this year, but maybe I can get started. For those of you who do want to plant, now is a good time to be thinking about cool weather crops. Late Fall and Winter are a good time to be focusing on leafy plants. Lettuce, mustard greens, collard and spinach. Swiss chard does well over the winter. Broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and kale all should do well this time of year. After a long hot summer, don't forget to work your garden soil. The soil will be depleted and needs to be amended. Last summers mulch is this winters compost, just work it in. I like to add some more compost if you have any. A few hands full of slow release fertilizer should do the trick, now work it all in. Keep an eye on the weather forecast. Lettuce can become bitter if the temperatures get above 90 degrees. That's still a possibility. This is "The Hill Country" where we can have all four seasons in the same day, this time of year.



Trails End



Cleanup Time



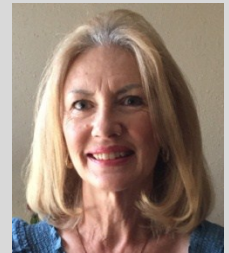
Next Generation



## **Nolina Texana** (also known as Texas Beargrass, Basket Grass, or Texas Sacahuista,)

**Texas Beargrass would make  
a striking addition to a  
xeriscape garden of yuccas**

By Cindy Anderson,  
Master Gardener &  
Native Plant Society



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 (formerly called Operation NICE!) 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. Formerly known as “Natives Instead of Common Exotics,” the N.I.C.E. acronym has also been updated. It now stands for “Natives Improve and Conserve Environments.” The program’s goals still remain the same – to introduce people to great native plants that are available locally to use in place of non-native species. Debbie Windham, President of the Kerrville chapter of NPSOT, loves to share the reasons to grow natives. “Native plants,” says Debbie, “have the admirable qualities of low maintenance, iron-tough constitution, and beauty. Many attract bees and butterflies to our gardens, or supply us with flavorings for cooking, tea, or medicinal purposes. Most are pest- and disease- resistant. Some reseed themselves, finding their own nooks and crannies where they can best survive, giving us the delight and surprise of finding new seedlings popping up alongside a desirable companion plant, or in a gravel walkway, easy to dig up and pass along to friends.”

This fall season (which begins on Monday, September 23), the Kerrville and Fredericksburg NPSOT chapters are featuring *Nolina texana* (also known as Texas Beargrass, Basket Grass, or Texas Sacahuista,) at five local nurseries as their N.I.C.E. Plant of the Season. Texas Beargrass is not a true grass – it is a grass-like perennial succulent that is actually a member of the Lily family. It usually grows to about 2 feet tall. Its firm-textured leaves are evergreen and form a thick, woody clump. It is native to woody areas with rocky soils in South Texas and West Texas, but can also be found in New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arizona and Colorado. One of its common names, “Basket Grass,” refers to the fact that Native Americans used the leaves for weaving baskets and mats, thatching, and ties for bundles. Often it is simply called “Beargrass,” and indeed bears have been known to use its leaves in winter dens during hibernation. It is also sometimes called Texas Sacahuista.

*Nolina texana* is the most commonly grown *Nolina* species, cultivated as an evergreen landscape plant that is suitable for both shady and sunny settings. It can be used as an accent plant in yards instead of non-native pampas grass. Its graceful, mounding form, slender leaves, and large flower clusters attract attention wherever it is used in the landscape. In late spring, one or more creamy-white flower stalks are produced down inside the rosette of foliage, and persist throughout the summer.

***Continued on page 7***



## Master Gardeners share their plant expertise at the Riverside Nature Center Fall Plant Sale, October 5, 2019

From left: Darla Cluster, Frank Dunlap, Patty Zohlen and Anne Brown.



### President's message continued from page 1

While growing pumpkins in the Hill Country might be difficult, children will be especially interested in watching pumpkins slowly increase in size. Patience is required. It might peak a child's interest in gardening if they are included in planting and harvesting some of the more unusual pumpkins and ornamental gourds.

Experimenting with new plants is fun. Sometimes gardening experiments are unsuccessful, but always a learning opportunity.

As you eat your Thanksgiving pumpkin pie or sip that cup of pumpkin spice latte, be thankful for the one who worked hard growing that pumpkin flavor you are enjoying.





## *Certificates awarded to Interns from the Class of 2019*



Two Interns completed the required hours to become certified as a Texas Master Gardener.

Left: Michelle "Mimi" Bouslog receives certificate from her mentor, Jackie Skinner.

Right: Peggy Ryan receives certificate from her mentor, Carol Edwards.



### **Nominating Committee**

From Left  
Karen Fuller, Terri Debusk  
and Lydia Jones are still  
looking for a treasurer for  
2020

Photo Credit: Mark Shultz

### **Attracting Birds with Native Plants continued from page 1**

Jan Wrede and Rufus Stephens combined their expertise in the their recently published book, ***Attracting Birds in the Texas Hill Country***. Jan Wrede is the former Director of Education and Citizen at the Cibolo Nature in Boerne. Jan is also author of ***Trees, Shrubs and Vines of the Texas Hill Country***. This book is in the Hill Country Master Gardeners library and is often the "go to book" to answer questions on the subject. Both books are published by Texas A&M press.

Rufus Stephens is a retired wildlife biologist who spent 23 years with Texas Parks and Wildlife. He is active in the Hill Country and has spoken many times to organizations in the Hill Country.

Both books will be for sale at the meeting. The price for *Attracting Birds* will be \$40 and the price for *Trees, Scrubs and Vine* is \$25. Cash and Checks only.

Many Master Gardeners have requested a program on birds and this is your opportunity to hear two people talk about this subject who have spent their lives studying Hill Country nature and plants. Come and learn. There will be an opportunity to get your questions answered. We hope to see you there!!!

Written by Edna Platte

***Nolina texana continued from page 4***

Like other xeric or Mediterranean plants, beargrass needs a hot dry period each summer in order to recharge. Xeric plants, also called drought-tolerant or drought-resistant, function completely normally and generally thrive in dry conditions. In an extended drought, however, some will use a survival mechanism such as defoliating or going dormant, to survive abnormally dry conditions. After some time they may need moisture to resume their normal lifestyle of flowering, setting seed, and looking great. However, one point that is often forgotten is that ANY plant, be it xeric, drought-tolerant, Texas native, etc., needs water to get established – meaning occasional supplemental irrigation, especially during the hottest days of the year, for the first 2 or 3 years.

*Nolina texana* combines well with broad-leaved succulents such as agaves and yuccas. A mass planting on a steep hillside would not only be striking but would also control soil erosion. Once established, this plant is highly drought tolerant, needs no fertilizer or pesticides, and is deer resistant. Beargrass is capable of surviving light and moderate fire, regrowing after fire, and thus serves an important role in soil erosion and site revegetation.

Beargrass is often used as a graceful, evergreen garden accent. It complements almost any other plant and provides color, texture, and structure in winter. It looks wonderful weeping over a large boulder. It is slow-growing but hardy and low maintenance, often called “bullet proof.” It is tolerant of alkaline soils and is deer and rodent resistant. Like many low-water plants, it requires excellent drainage to avoid root and crown rot.

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, and Medina:

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

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

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

**Why go native?**

To sustain our local ecosystem, native plants are essential, and many non-native plants are extremely detrimental. Non-natives may seed out more easily, grow faster, and use more water – proliferating and crowding out native species until the natives become extinct.

Native plants, on the other hand, have lived here for centuries (without fertilizer or pesticides); have evolved to withstand our temperature and moisture extremes and our poor soil; and have supported the local wildlife by providing food and shelter for our native animals, birds and insects.

As they are forced to compete with non-native plants for resources, the native plants become fewer and fewer until they are crowded out or eaten to extinction.

- ◆ From the Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter and Fredericksburg Chapter.
- ◆ 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](http://npsot.org/kerrville) for details.

## A Farm to Table History

Written by Cinnamon Janzer | June 22, 1918



It's impossible to talk about the rise of farm-to-table without discussing the fall of the processed food empire. Packaged goods thrived after innovations in food processing and storage, and peaked with the ubiquity of canned food during the 1950s. Processed food continued to reign supreme until the 1960s and 1970s. At that point, the hippie movement—comprised of constituents who were fans of local and organic food—swept the States.

"The counterculture is always ahead of what's happening in mainstream culture," explains Lucky Peach's Peter Meehan. After a few years, hippie preferences began showing up in formal food structures. In 1979, the non-profit "Organically Grown" opened in Oregon. In 1986, Carlo Perini founded the Slow Food Organization in Italy. Back in the States, pioneers like Alice Waters arose. Alice, a champion of local, sustainable agriculture, opened the legendary Chez Panisse in 1971. In 2003, Kimbal Musk started The Kitchen in Boulder, CO.

**The Principles Behind Farm to Table:** the main driving forces behind the farm to table or farm to fork movement, whichever you prefer to call it, have to do with the ethics of food production. There are four pillars to the movement:

**Food security.** The farm to table movement increases the scope of food security to move beyond the food needs of individuals or families and look at the needs of both the larger community, with a focus on low-income households. "It has a strategic goal of developing local food systems," the article notes.

**Proximity.** The farm to table movement hinges on the notion that the various components of a food system (or a restaurant) should exist in the closest proximity to each other as possible. The goal is to develop relationships between the various stakeholders in a food system such as "farmers, processors, retailers, restaurateurs, consumers" and more. Additionally, proximity reduces the environmental impact of transporting ingredients across states or countries.

**Self-reliance.** One of the goals of farm to table is to generate communities that can meet their own food needs, again eliminating the need for outside resources or long distance transportation of food.

**Sustainability.** The core idea here is that farm to table food systems exist in a way that doesn't stifle "the ability of future generations to meet their food needs," meaning that it doesn't destroy resources in the process.

That said, the farm to fork movement includes other goals as well, such as increasing the health of a community and increasing access to food across an entire community.

Today, "as many as 1,200 school districts around the country, from Alabama to Iowa, have linked up with local farms to serve fresh vegetables and fruit to children. Last year, Iowa's Woodbury County mandated that its food service suppliers buy from local farmers.

**What's clear is that the farm to table movement is not a passing trend. It's designed to change the culture around how we eat.**





## HCMG Monthly Business Meeting October 2, 2019

Call to Order :Rachel Garrison called the meeting to order.  
Pledge of Allegiance-Imelda Horne led the pledge.  
Invocation-Patti Schlessiger gave the invocation.  
Verification of Quorum – Patti Schlessiger verified a quorum  
Approval of September 4, 2019 Minutes-Minutes were approved as read, with one correction.

### Executive Committee Reports



seconded by Anne Brown and approved by all.

### Standing Committee Reports

Logo Wear – Debbie Bacon passed around a sample shirt with the new logo. She is taking orders for logo wear.

Treasurer's Report – Bernadell Larson reported that the Scholarship account was transferred from Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union to Guadalupe State Bank. Bernadell went over report, Kathy Lewis moved to accept the report,



Public Programs – Ray Tiemann reported forty people have so far signed up for the Tree Class. Jackie Skinner asked for volunteers to sign up to bring cookies, etc. by Friday and drop off at the Extension Office. Ray asked what other topics would members like to have a class on. Suggestions were: Landscape Design, Fruit and Nut Trees, Turf Grass, Irrigation, Permeable Hardscapes, Identifying Diseases and Bugs and Invasive Plants.  
Unfinished Business—MG needed to do Publicity Job  
New Business Nominating Committee Report-Terri Debusk, Karen Fuller and Lydia Jones presented the nominees that have thus far been found: President-Rachel Garrison, Vice President-Debbie Bacon, Secretary – open, Treasurer – open. Intern Donna Nutt has indicated interest once she is certified. Patty Zohlen moved to put a wavier on the Bylaws to extend the term of this position until Donna is certified. Patti Schlessiger volunteered to continue to serve until that time. This was approved. Treasurer-Brian Strickland asked what the cost to hire a bookkeeper would be. Bernadell said approximately

\$60/hour. Patty Zohlen asked Bernadell to give a rundown of her duties, and she did, referring also to the written description. Chris Seifert proposed getting a bookkeeper, who is also a friend of hers to work alongside the treasurer. The search continues for a treasurer.

### Announcements

- Dusty Gilliam – class of 2002- One of the original members of the first class has passed away. Dusty presented a slide show of the original members of Hill Country Master Gardeners. Tommy Airhart, as well as Dusty were in that group. She told about the scholarships that have been setup in Annesse Thomas' name.
- Christmas Luncheon – December 4 at Riverhill Country Club - \$20 -Bernadell will be collecting payments for the luncheon. Payments are due by November meeting. She also reminded members that dues are due (\$20.00). Two separate checks are required.
- Jackie Connelly reminded everyone to get their hours entered into VMS.
- Nominations for Volunteer of the Year award-Rachel reminded members to send in nominations for this award. Nominations need to be received by November 11th
- Charitable donation –Gillespie County-Rachel asked for suggestions for a non-profit to give to this year.
- Certification Presentations-Jackie Skinner presented her mentee, Mimi Bouslog her certificate, and Caroll Edwards presented her mentee, Peggy Ryan with hers.
- Jackie Skinner asked for volunteers to come help work in the Demo Garden on October 8th from 9:00 to 12:00, bring tools. The Demo Garden Committee will meet same day from 11:15 to 12:00, bring a brown bag lunch.
- Pam Umstead invited everyone to the Fall Festival on October 26th, from 10:00 to 2:00 at the Glory Community Garden.
- Sandy Martin passed around books for members to review.

### Adjournment

Next meeting – November 6, 2019, HCYEC;  
Committee Chairs will meet at 11:30 on Nov 6th at HCYEC please bring a brown bag lunch.

October CEU – Brian Strickland, Roses

November CEU –Jan Wrede –  
Attracting Hill Country Birds

Respectfully submitted:  
Patti Schlessiger,  
Secretary



*Photo Credit:  
Mark Shultz*

**Hill Country Master  
Gardeners 201p  
Executive  
Committee**

Rachel Garrison  
*President*

Debra Bacon  
*Vice President*

Patti Schlessiger  
*Secretary*

Bernadell Larson  
*Treasurer*

Jackie Skinner  
*Ex-officio Advisor*

Roy Walston  
*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

*Continuing Education Editor*  
Raeann Reid

*Webmaster*  
Stan Zwinggi

**Submissions to**

Newsletter.editor.hcmg  
@gmail.com

Contribution Made in  
Memory of Member of 2002  
Texas Master Gardener Class

One of our HCMG members passed away in September and one of her classmates made a special gesture to honor her memory.



Dusty Gilliam

Annese Thomas loved landscaping and nature. She and her husband lived in Kerrville for the last twenty five years. Annese was very passionate about gardening and was a member of the first graduating class of Hill Country Master Gardeners in 2002. Long time friend and classmate, Dusty Gilliam, and another gardening friend, Freya Wendling, from Hunt, wanted to do something special to honor her. They decided that Annese would be so pleased if she knew two scholarships to the TMG class in 2020 were made in her name.

Dusty made the presentation at our October meeting and light heartedly told us of her friend and the history of the HCMGs' beginnings. Look at all those smiles in their class picture. Annese is sitting next to Dusty who is sitting next to Tommie Airhart who is sitting next to Anna Osborne. What a HOOT that class must have been.

Thank you Dusty and Freya for continuing Annese's passion of teaching good gardening practices.

If any of you know someone who you think would greatly benefit from the scholarship to HCMGs 2020 TMG class, please contact Rachel Garrison at [nonna15@me.com](mailto:nonna15@me.com) or Donna Bellis at [ceterpt1@gmail.com](mailto:ceterpt1@gmail.com)

**Article by Jackie Connelly**

