



The Scion

Newsletter



Published by Bexar County Master Gardeners, a nonprofit 501c(3) - Kimber Briggs, Class 58, Editor
David Rodriguez, County Extension Agent – Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Happy New Year!

Dear Master Gardeners –

Happy New Year to all! I hope everyone had a joyous Christmas and Holiday Season and, if out of town, returned to San Antonio safe and sound.

During 2017, I am proud to represent the Bexar County Master Gardeners on the Executive Committee of the Texas Master Gardener Association (TMGA). At the December meeting I was elected as Vice President of the TMGA and will do my best to represent your interests to our state association.

The New Year promises to be busy and challenging. In November, the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) gave San Antonians the opportunity to purchase, at a discount, one or two of 6,000 rain barrels. The barrels have sold-out. Each purchaser has been given a reserved time slot to pick up the barrel or barrels at the Alamo Stadium on Saturday, January 14th. The BCMG was initially asked to provide a short 5-10 minute educational presentation on the safe installation and anchoring of the rain barrel, but SAWS has changed their plans and we will not do that now. A small number of volunteers may be needed to assist SAWS employees in dispensing the rain barrels, but we'll know more for sure after the New Year and will get the information to you quickly.

We are definitely going to Rodeo and will sign up volunteers at the January 19th monthly meeting – bring your favorite chili and Frito's to the meeting! We previously included a detailed schematic of the Lil' Buckaroo Tent in an issue of the *Scion* but an updated schematic is included in this issue of *Scion* for your information. We anticipate the Lil' Buckaroo tent will be up and in place by Sunday, January 15th and construction to start Monday, January 23rd. Our construction efforts will start that week. Rodeo is scheduled to open on Thursday, February 9th.

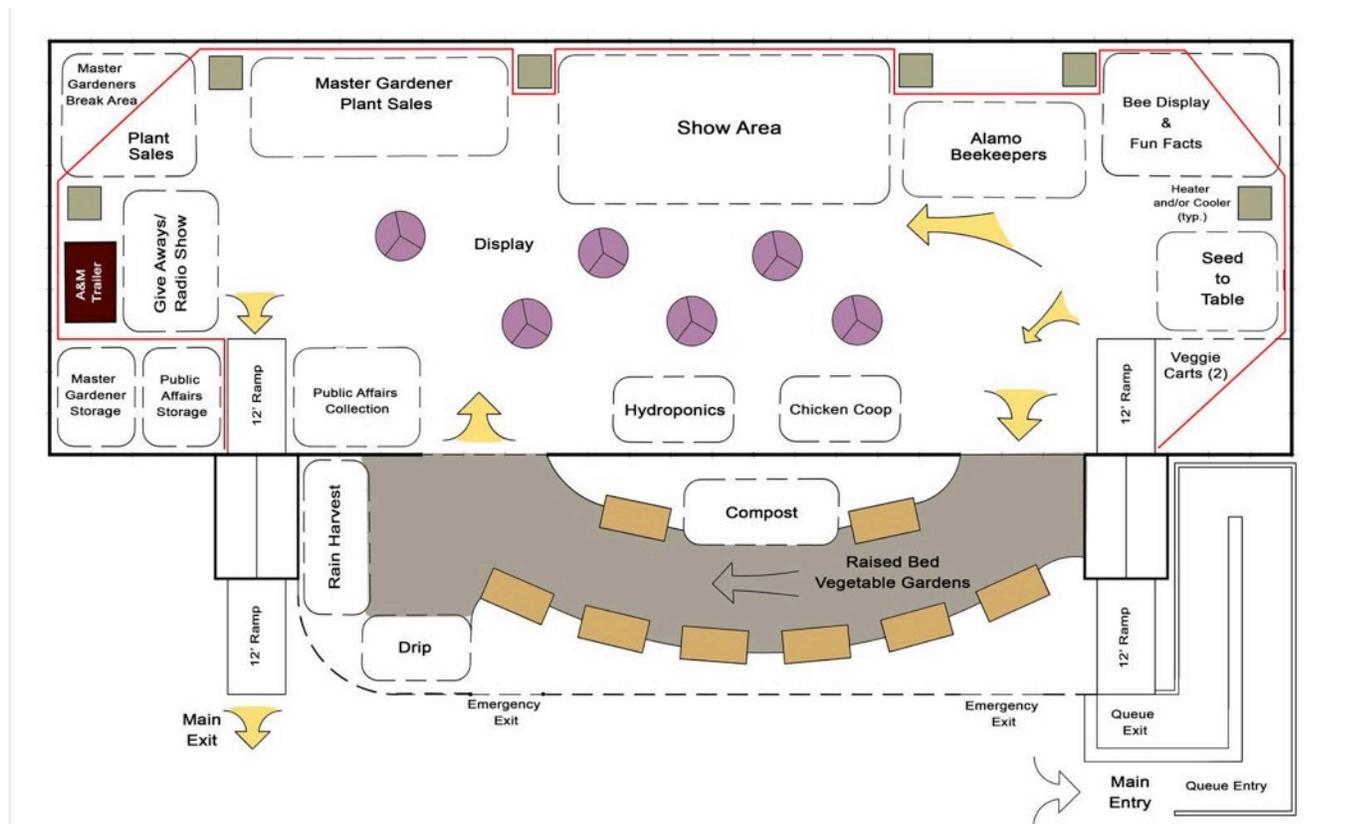
MG President's Message, Cont.

We had hoped to use VMS to sign-up Rodeo volunteers, but the system cannot handle the number of shifts we have each day so we're resorting to the tried and true "sign up in person" method at the January 19th meeting. All other volunteer opportunities throughout the year will be posted on the VMS General Events Calendar and Master Gardeners must sign-up using VMS if they want to record volunteer hours.

Angel is working hard to prepare our Membership Cards. If you pay your annual dues before the January 19th meeting you can pick up your new card at that meeting. If anyone has any financial difficulty meeting the annual dues requirement, please let me know. Several of your fellow Master Gardeners have generously offered to assist a Master Gardener who needs some financial assistance. Your information will be kept in strictest confidence.

Thanks for all you did last year! Let's look forward to an even better year during the upcoming year.

*Jack Downey, President
Bexar County Master Gardeners*



RODEO 2017

Scale: Tic Marks are in Increments of 5'

SCHEMATIC



Master Gardener of the YEAR

By: Ann Marie Caldwell, JMG 1



In the month of January we honor the **Master Gardener of the Year**, selected by the Board as the best representative of the volunteer spirit of the Bexar County Master Gardeners. This year's selection is our own Master Gardener Board President **Jack Downey**. Jack is well known by all, not only because of his elected position, but also for his ubiquitous presence at many Master Gardener events and activities. Jack brings to our organization a wealth of talent and experience, gleaned, first by his

long military service and then by his position as the Founder and CEO of Downey Associates, a consulting firm that helps non-profit organizations with fundraising and the restructuring of their organization so that it can run more economically and efficiently. During the 26 years that Jack spent on active duty in the Air Force, he served as Base Commander for the largest Air Force base complex in Europe and, at the time of his retirement, he was Commander of USAF Recruiting for the middle third of the United States. It is from this wellspring of experience that Jack began making significant changes in the organizational structure of the Bexar County Master Gardeners.

Upon assuming office one year ago as President of the Bexar County Master Gardeners, Jack turned his considerable skills toward improving its organizational structure. Under his leadership the website "bexarmg.org" was redesigned to make it more user friendly. It now contains easy to read monthly event calendars, a list of current volunteer and continuing education opportunities, an ordered list of clothing items available for purchase, copies of the weekly E-blasts, and present and archived issues of the *Scion Newsletter*. Additionally, it is now possible for applicants for Master Gardener training classes to easily download an application from the website. Jack also introduced another important feature of the redesigned site: the Volunteer Management System, which allows members to quickly and easily record their volunteer and continuing educational hours and to keep abreast of the hours that they have accumulated in each category. This new website feature has increased transparency and gives everyone equal opportunity to participate in the organizational activities of their choosing.

MG of the Year, Cont.

In an effort to provide transparency and a framework for future actions, Jack also wrote and obtained approval from the Board of Directors for twenty board policies that capture the decision-making processes of the Bexar County Master Gardeners. Among these policies is a new one that requires active members to have obtained 3 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) by attending month meetings. The result of this policy change has been a tripled attendance at monthly meetings.

Jack has also turned his attention to the make-up of new Master Gardener training classes so that new applicants will have some of the wide range of skills needed by our diverse organization. Formerly, membership in the Bexar County Master Gardeners was by application, with thirty applicants chosen at random for entering the 16-week training class. Jack persuaded the Texas A&M Extension Service to allow the Master Gardeners to interview applicants for the training classes. The result has been that over half of the trainees for the first class of interviewed applicants have experience in accounting, website maintenance, social media, and management -- all skills needed to maintain a vibrant organization. This new policy has resulted in the selection of 32 talented individuals, who all completed the training course and are now the most active class of graduates in known history.

Under Jack's tenure as our President, significant revisions were made to the contract the Bexar County Master Gardeners have with the San Antonio Water System (SAWS). This new contract agreement resulted in a severe financial budget deficit for the Bexar County Master Gardeners. Part of the responsibilities of leadership is the task of making difficult and sometimes unpopular decisions. Jack did not flinch from doing what had to be done to keep the Bexar County Master Gardeners solvent: he proposed and got Board approval for the requirement that all Bexar County Master Gardeners pay an annual membership fee of \$25 starting January 1, 2017. Thus, in order to keep their membership current, all members will now be required to pay this fee in addition to completing 30 volunteer hours and 6 credits of continuing education

Jack has also made changes to the financial accounting system used by the Bexar County Master Gardeners by separating the Master Gardener accounts from the AgriLife accounts. The Master Gardeners now have a clear view of their monthly financial situation and each staff member of AgriLife receives a separate monthly accounting that shows their revenue and expenses. In this way, the Master Gardeners are, for the first time, able to financially plan and execute a focused budget.

In his short time as President Jack has also led the way in developing new programs under the sponsorship of the Bexar County Master Gardeners. Thanks to his leadership the Master Gardeners, in cooperation with the San Antonio Parks & Recreation, have opened a

MG of the Year, Cont.

Children's Garden for home-schooled children in Hardberger Park. Jack has also worked with the Hemisfair Park Redevelopment Association to re-establish the Master Gardener presence in Hemisfair Park by establishing an educational garden surrounding the Schultze House, an historic 1893 German cottage. This garden, when completed, will showcase 73 Texas Superstar plants (shrubs, trees, and vines) specifically developed for the San Antonio environment with appropriate educational signage to assist home gardeners in using drought resistant and water conserving plantings in their own gardens. Additionally, in cooperation with the Mayor of San Antonio, Jack has led the Bexar County Master Gardeners into the Monarch Butterfly community. Mayor Ivy Taylor has become the first Mayor in the United States to sign the Monarch Butterfly Pledge requiring comprehensive community efforts to assist the annual migration of the Monarch Butterfly through planning and executing the plantings of nectar and pollinator plants used by the Monarch in its annual migration to Mexico. Jack represented the Master Gardeners at all the planning meetings and ensured our participation in the first ever Monarch festival at the Pearl Brewery. Thousands of San Antonio residents attended this educational event to learn about the Monarch Butterfly's life cycle and to purchase Monarch supportive plants while they were treated to viewing the release of hundreds of Monarchs into the environment. The Master Gardeners sold more plants at this festival than at any other plant sale throughout the year.

Jack continues to plan for the expansion of the Bexar County Master Gardener Organization into the San Antonio community. To that end, he has instituted planning for an inaugural "Fall Master Gardener Garden Show" to showcase Bexar County Master Gardeners through gardening presentations covering topics such as rainwater harvesting, rain barrel construction, raised bed construction, composting and other gardening disciplines and interests. The Garden Show will focus entirely on all aspects of gardening with inclusive assistance from the entire San Antonio gardening community. Jack anticipates that this Garden Show will be an annual event and a major source of revenue for Master Gardener programs.

With the above list of accomplishments it is little wonder that Jack Downey has been chosen as the Master Gardener of the Year. He works tirelessly to improve and promote the Bexar County Master Gardeners. With his expertise, he has made significant organizational improvements and he has instituted programs that will increase community awareness of the good work that we do. Thank you, Jack, from the bottom of our hearts, for all of the hard work you have done for the Bexar County Master Gardeners. There is not a more deserving recipient of this honor.

BCMG CHRISTMAS PARTY and Awards Ceremony 2017



BCMG Christmas Party, Cont.



BCMG Christmas Party, Cont.

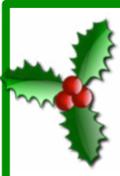


*Order of the Golden Trowel
(Above & Left)*



BCMG Christmas Party, Cont.



 **BCMG SERVICE AWARDS CEREMONY** 
December 5, 2016

Congratulations to the following Bexar County Master Gardeners who have reached a significant milestone anniversary with our organization. A special awards ceremony was held December 5th at the annual Christmas party to recognize these individuals. Members who could not attend the Christmas party may pick up their service anniversary pins at the next BCMG meeting or by contacting Susan Noonan, susan.noonan@gmail.com.

2016 BCMG Service Anniversaries

25 Years, Class 3



Carl Lahser

Carlos Oriz



20 Years, Class 15



Pat Kempf



15 Years, Class 33



Jamie Daily

Patricia Brown

Edith Burkey

Barbara Hall

Ann Marie Pease



Service Anniversaries, Cont.

10 Years, Class 43, 44



Sara Holland-Adams

Jack Hoover

Mike Lyle

Linda Horton

Betty Hyman

Donna Irwin

Helois Laiche

Laura Rogers

John Tepera

Linda Sroczynski

Michael Sroczynski

Ben Wyatt

Twyla Benson

Harriet Buffington

Joan Cleary

Judith Hanna

Linda Maldonado

Dewayne Nelson

Ann Vargas

Brigid Oman

Elizabeth Malloy

Angel Torres

Marlyn Franks

Glenda Haynes

John Mayer

Monika Menczer

Milton Glueck



**10 Years, Jr. Master
Gardener Class 1**



Dolly Jo Johnson

Donna Kadilis

Joyce Austin

Margaret Bass

Ann Caldwell

Donna James

Debra Reasor

Sherri McShane



Service Anniversaries, Cont.

5 Years, Class 53



Nancy Adkins
Lucille Almaguer
Nancy Anthony
Nancy Black
Lily Denley
Kathy Durbin
Rita Hannah
Lynda Klein
Gene Landes
Margie Larkin
Carolyn Martin
Mary Newsom
Jose Reyes
Pat Tiner



5 Years, Class 54



Cappy Bird
Shawn Bowers
Paul Foerster
John McElroy, Jr.
Martha Robinson
Marcia Rockne
Mary Valdez
Richard Valdez
Jane Whitaker
Stan Winchester
Amanda Recker





Bexar County Master Gardeners

Order of the Golden Trowel

Recognition for exceptional volunteerism

2014

Ed Bradley '36 VIP
Roger Christensen '45
Shanna Ciano '36
Jamie Daily '33
Mary Fernandez '41
Stephanie Jones 46
Sandy Justice '32
Lou Kellogg '40

Barbara Lutz '40
Pete Mendiola '37
Inez Ornelas '32
Ted Ritchie '06 VIP
Anne Marie Simmons '57
Sir Oliver "Smitty" Smith '20
Andrew Waring '58

2015

Kimber Briggs '58
Jack Downey '13
Mary Duffy '56

Numa Laiche '43
Judie Lopez '39
Ann Marie Pease '33

2016

Nancy Alford '59
Shawn Bowers '54
Mary Cross '51
Grace Emery '60

Karin Foote '41
Lynda Klein '53
John Maldonado '60
Mike Tayloe '60



January Gardening Chores

Tom Harris, Ph. D., BCMG Class 13

"The Hill Country Gardener"

www.thehillcountrygardener.com



Birds and Wildlife

- Clean out your bluebird, wren, martin, and other birdhouses to get them ready for February. Martin scouts and first-breeding birds of other species will be in town in February.
- There are still some hummingbirds around, so keep your feeders in place. 1 part sugar to 4 parts water. No coloring needed.

Color

- Continue to care for your pansies, bluebonnets, snapdragons, spring bulbs, dianthus, calendulas and other winter annuals. Don't over-water bluebonnets.
- There is still time to transplant pansies, dianthus, stocks, calendulas and other cool-season annual flowers. Protect small plants against severe cold until they are well established (2-3 weeks).
- Side-dress flowering plants with your favorite lawn fertilizer if you haven't fertilized in the last six weeks. Use one cup of lawn fertilizer or two cups of organic fertilizer per 100 square feet.
- Bluebonnets will have an active growth spurt in February and March. Protect them and pansies from slugs and snails with labeled baits or beer traps.
- Use water-soluble fertilizers or hibiscus food for bougainvilleas and other plants that are actively growing in the greenhouse.

Bougainvilleas will bloom all winter if they are in a greenhouse. Keep watering and fertilizing.

- Many tulips, daffodils, paperwhites and other spring bulbs emerge and bloom this month. They benefit from nitrogen fertilization at the rate of two cups of lawn fertilizer or four cups of organic fertilizer per 100 square feet of bed.

- If the weather is warm, watch for aphids. A strong spray of water gets them off the foliage and flowers. If you use an insecticide, be sure to spray the soil under the plants, as that is where the eggs will be.

- Spring-blooming, pre-chilled bulbs can still be planted if done early in the month. Just remember that tulips are considered annuals in south Texas. In the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, they are perennials.

- Be sure to maintain moisture in house plants. Humidity is low inside the house and the plants dry out quickly. Do not place houseplants near a heat source or in a bright-sun window. Poinsettias may be placed in sunny locations, however. Be sure to keep them watered. If they drop their leaves due to dryness, they will probably die.

- Repot Christmas cactus in a peat moss- or pine bark-based medium. Keep the soil moist but not sloppy wet.

- This is the time to move any perennials that are in the wrong place at your house. Before

January Gardening Chores, Cont.

moving, prune them back by about 1/3 to 1/2.

Fruits and Nuts

- Apply dormant oil to control scale and other insects on fruit trees. Wait until the temperature will be at least 70°F for two days following application. Follow the instructions on the label.
- January is the second best month to prune trees...February is best.
- Bare-root and containerized fruit trees, blackberries and grapes should be selected and planted as soon as possible so they will be well established before spring growth begins. The selection of recommended varieties of fruit and nut trees is critical for long-term success.

Ornamentals

- Don't prune blooms on early-blooming plants like, mountain laurel, flowering peach, ornamental cherry, climbing roses, althea, etc. Wait until after bloom is complete.
- Keep your living Christmas tree well watered (once per week) during the establishment period (6-8 months.)

Shade Trees and Shrubs

- If you must prune oak trees, January is a good month to do it. Always paint any wounds bigger than your pinkie immediately after cutting to prevent oak wilt.
- January and February are the best months to do any major fruit or ornamental tree and shrub pruning. Prune deciduous trees now while you can see damaged or rubbing limbs, misshaped parts, etc. Do NOT top the trees.

- Wait until temperatures are expected to be above freezing for at least 48 hours to apply a dormant oil spray to euonymus, hollies, oaks, pines, pecans, and fruit trees which are prone to scale.

- This is an excellent time to plant new shrubs and trees. Dig the hole twice as wide as the pot but no deeper. Dig the hole first and then put the plant in. Water immediately. Remember that many of these plants will be there for years and years so be sure you have it where you want it to be.

- Should you need to transplant established trees and shrubs, do so now while they are still dormant and will have sufficient time to re-establish a root system before spring growth begins. Remove at least one-third to one-half of the top growth of bare-root plants (not necessary with container-grown plants) to compensate for roots lost in the transplanting process.

Turf Grass

- If you don't receive an inch of rain, water the lawn. One inch every 2-3 weeks is enough. Buffalo, zoysia and Bermuda grasses are dormant—don't water them.

- It's a good time to aerate with the plug-cutter type and then top dress with a half-inch of compost.

- Don't fertilize or use weed-and-feed products. If there is weed growth, mow every 3-4 weeks.

- Gradually build up low spots in the lawn with one inch of compost, sand, or top-dressing. Be sure the leaves of the grass stick through the compost so as not to smother the grass.

January Gardening Chores, Cont.

- January is the best month to plant trees, but with fruit and nut trees selection of adapted species is critical for long-term success. Select trees for permanence and durability, not just for fast growth.
- You could still overseed with Elbon rye grass, but it may or may not do well. Depends on how cold it gets after you plant it and before it germinates.

Vegetables

- If you pluck or cut individual leaves from lettuce or spinach, they will continue to produce into late spring. Keep the broccoli, cauliflower, chard and Brussels sprouts harvested (use a sharp knife) to maintain quality and production.
- Keep your cauliflower heads bleached by covering them with leaves held in place by a clothes pin or rubber band.
- Harvest broccoli heads before the flowers open.
- If you notice cabbage loopers in broccoli and other cole crops, use Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) or Spinosad.
- String-mow your Elbon rye and vetch and till it into the garden at the end of January.
- By the end of the month, thin onions you planted in October so that plants are 6-8 inches apart. This will allow maximum bulbs to develop.
- Side dress actively growing vegetables at the rate of one cup of slow-release lawn fertilizer or two cups organic fertilizer per 10 feet of row. Use two cups for leafy vegetables and onions.

- It's time to buy tomato and pepper seeds if you have a greenhouse. Transplants won't be available for a few weeks yet.
- You may want to plant some potatoes this month. Dig a trench about a foot deep and place potato pieces with one or more eyes every foot. Fill the trench half way with good, loose soil and keep filling as the stems emerge leaving about 2 inches above the soil. Fill until the soil is level again.
- After mid-month, begin planting transplants of asparagus, cabbage, leeks, onions and shallots.





Junior Master Gardener Page

Hello All! Welcome to the **Junior Master Gardener Monthly Updates Page**. Here you will find what our special JMG trained volunteers and Bexar County Master Gardeners have done for the Youth Gardens Program and some new volunteer opportunities with kids.

Learn Grow Eat and Go!

We have finally reached our week 10 of the Learn Grow Eat and Go! Program and have officially graduated 208 students this fall! Thank you so much to **Barbara Burrell, Ted Ritchie, Jennifer Sierra, and Stephen Reyna** for helping out this season at our Learn Grow Eat Go schools, Palo Alto Elementary, Baskin Elementary, and Wrenn Middle School. They have been assisting with the lessons and garden activities with students. The students

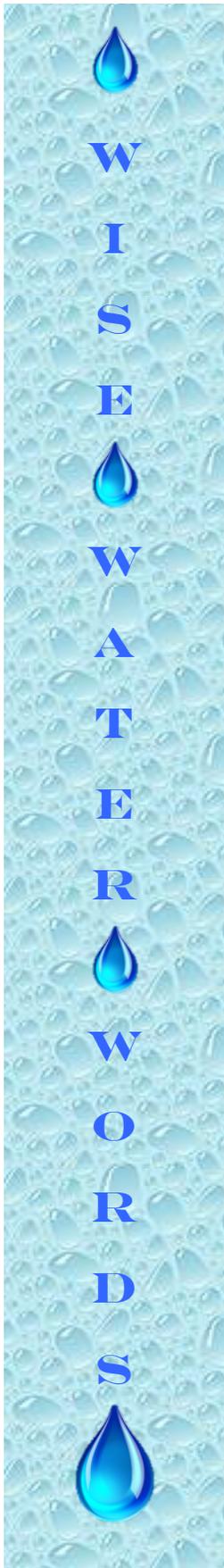
The Learn Grow Eat Go! program attempts to encourage better eating behaviors and inspire more physical activity among young people as a means to help address health issues, such as obesity and diabetes, affecting millions of Texans. The curriculum, which was developed by the International Junior Master Gardener program of AgriLife Extension, focuses on growing a school garden, learning about nutrition and healthy eating, making better food choices and getting more exercise.

The schools that adopted the LGEG Program were selected because their school showed an exceptional interest in their students' health and nutrition, and we hope to continue to support schools like these. We have three schools ready for the program in spring and look forward to working with three more in fall.

For more information on how you can help too on our LGEG projects and schools contact Ruby Zavala at Ruby.Zavala@ag.tamu.edu



Mrs. Bustamante from Baskin Elementary said, *"Myself, Amalia Cortez and Maryann Felix all had kids in the program, and it was a wonderful experience for the students and they really enjoyed planting and harvesting the garden. They also enjoyed the recipes and shared them with their families."*



Hello fellow Master Gardeners and Happy 2017!

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and enjoyed some time with your friends and families.

As we begin the New Year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all the hard work and support in 2016. It has been quite a busy year with us renewing the SAWS contract and shifting focus on the types of programs we conduct. I appreciate all the support you gave in continuing our standard programs and in developing new workshops and innovative ideas for the future. Over the last year in water conservation programs alone, we conducted 82 events with over 900 hours of volunteer support. Our outreach ranged from large public events like the H&G show to small community classes, with almost 2,000 people in attendance. We trained additional Master Gardeners to conduct more rainwater harvesting workshops and are currently developing drip irrigation training and other workshops to further expand our outreach.

As we look to the coming year, we will try to develop and conduct some large public events while sustaining our regular MG activities. Thanks again to the entire BCMG membership and especially to the more than 175 water conservation volunteers who helped make 2016 another successful year.

I look forward to working with all of you in 2017 and if anyone would like to become more involved, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Conservationally yours,

Anna Vogler

Water Conservation Coordinator



POINSETTIA SALE!



December 2, 2016

Photo Credit: Candy Roach, Class 59



Brian *Roach* and David Rodriguez unloading poinsettias.



Inventory



Poinsettia Sale, Cont.





AgriLife Advice



Poinsettia trial shows effect of high temperatures on plant growth and flowering

- Writer: Adam Russell, 903-834-6191, adam.russell@ag.tamu.edu
- Contact: Dr. Brent Pemberton, 903-834-6191, b-pemberton@tamu.edu

VERTON – Rows of vivid red poinsettias inside Greenhouse No. 4 at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Overton are as eye-catching as a flashing stop light.

Dr. Brent Pemberton, AgriLife Research ornamental horticulturist in Overton, began a trial of more than 30 varieties of the popular holiday flower associated with Christmas to determine how high temperatures affect the growth and flowering of the tropical perennial.

Poinsettias are grown in the fall for sales around the holidays, Pemberton said. The flower naturally sets its buds as days get shorter.

“Sometimes in Texas we can have warmer temperatures in late September and early October when all of this is happening and those high temperatures can have a deleterious effect on floral development and delay crops,” he said. “Producers need to have poinsettias peaking to within a week of a certain date. Typically stores want them before Black Friday, so they’ll ship them before Thanksgiving.”

For that reason, all commercial poinsettias are grown in greenhouses where producers can control temperatures and conditions to have the flowers peak according to contracts with buyers, Pemberton said.

Over the years, varieties have been developed that can tolerate higher temperatures in Texas and the southern U.S., Pemberton said. Trials have been ongoing for several years and there’s interest within the industry to continue research on poinsettias.

“Those breeding efforts continue, so what we are doing here is testing commercial breeding lines to look at the effects of high temperatures,” he said. “The end product will be more heat-tolerant varieties that are good for Texas growers and consumers.”

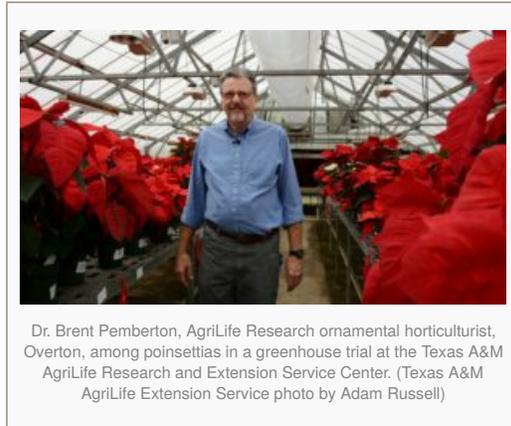
Pemberton received the plants in early September. The trial placed varieties in separate greenhouses with daily average temperatures of 72 degrees and 82 degrees.

Poinsettias in higher temperatures during floral initiation tend to stretch and do not develop bracts, which provide the color, as quickly or in preferred numbers, Pemberton said.

Bracts, the recognizable red leafy showcase for the plant, in red varieties, are actually leaves that change physiologically during the natural development of the plant, Pemberton said.

Many plants in the higher temperature greenhouse have yet to flower, he said.

“We treat them with high temperatures for several weeks which would be extreme for production greenhouses but



Dr. Brent Pemberton, AgriLife Research ornamental horticulturist, Overton, among poinsettias in a greenhouse trial at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Service Center. (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service photo by Adam Russell)

AgriLife Advice, Cont.

this helps breeders make advances in looking at varieties best suited for Texas growers,” he said.

Under lower average daily temperatures, poinsettias grew to desirable heights, 12-18 inches for plants in 6-inch pots, and bracts were much more numerous and deep vibrant red, Pemberton said.

“They’re a much more desirable plant both from a grower standpoint and for shipping and placement in a retail setting and something that consumers will enjoy more as a decorative plant in their home,” he said.



Most all commercial poinsettias are grown in greenhouses which allows producers to control their growth and when they flower, ensuring they peak for holiday season sales. (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service photo by Adam Russell)



Bexar County Master Gardeners are once again participating in *Birdies for Charity*® a fundraising program designed in 1997, to give participating charities and schools the opportunity to generate contributions through the Valero Texas Open. *Birdies for Charity*® is a no-cost program that gives 100% of the funds raised back to the participating organization.

Birdies for Charity® is like a walk-a-thon, but instead of donating per mile, participants make a pledge for every birdie made at the Valero Texas Open. The 2016 Valero Texas Open had 1,834 birdies made, so a pledge of \$0.01 yielded a donation of \$18.34. Donors also have the ability to make a one-time donation and flexibility to pay in advance or to be billed after the tournament. Donations are tax deductible.

***Birdies for Charity*® is the only fundraiser in which the Bexar County Master Gardeners participate. It is the only time we ask the members for financial help.**

You will soon receive pledge forms in the mail, or you can make a donation online at <http://www.valerotexasopen.com/birdies/>.

Your contribution to *Birdies for Charity*® can make a real difference in how well BCMG will succeed in its efforts to continue to support the programs we provide to the San Antonio community.

If you have questions or you want more information or a pledge form, contact Barbara Lutz at 699-0663 or bblutz@stic.net.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



GET READY TO RODEO! (Rodeo Meeting & Presentation)

When: Thu, Jan 19, 6-8:30pm
Where: 3355 Cherry Ridge, San Antonio, TX, 78230
Info: Meeting begins with a social time at 6pm followed by rodeo meeting at 6:30pm. For information, email [Jack Downey, BCMG President](mailto:Jack.Downey@bcmg.org), or call 210-699-0663.

NEXT MONTH'S MEETING:
 Date: February 16, 1-3 pm
 Speaker: Ed Bradley



MASTER GARDENER SPECIALIST COURSES IN 2017

If you are interested in attending, please email [David Rodriguez](mailto:David.Rodriguez@bcmg.org), Extension Agent-Horticulture, Bexar County. **BCMG CEU Code: 001.**

Home Fruit Specialist - Southern Texas, Feb 9-10, Gonzales - See [MG Calendar!](#)

Rainwater Harvesting Specialist, Apr 10-12, Bexar County MGs, San Antonio

Vegetable Specialist, Oct 17-19, Bexar County MGs, San Antonio

ATTENTION ALL BCMG!

Please visit the new [Bexar County Master Gardeners website](http://www.bexarmg.org) to get DETAILS on all the latest, hottest news and upcoming VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES! While at the website, you can also check out the Master Calendar for your future planning.

NEED TO REPORT YOUR HOURS?

Go To: www.bexarmg.org
 Click on "Members"
 Scroll down and click on "Report Your Volunteer Hours"

*Join our
Master Gardener Group on
Facebook!*

[Click Here](#)



Lawn & Garden Show Podcast

[Click Here](#)



*Happy
New
Year!*

Let's Get Ready for Rodeo 2017!

**January General Meeting
Thursday, January 19, 2017**

3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 208

San Antonio, Texas 78230

6:00 - 6:30 pm Social 6:30 - 8:00 pm Meeting



Be sure to attend our “Get Ready for Rodeo” meeting this month. You will learn what’s new for our tent this year, hear David Rodriguez tell us about the plants that will be for sale at the Master Gardener Booth, and sign-up for volunteer shifts!

Bring your best pot of chili to share with your fellow Master Gardeners!

Let's RODEO San Antonio!

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Greeters** - Every day during Rodeo volunteers are stationed at the barn entrance to greet and welcome guests as well as tally the number of people coming in.
- **Hospitality** - Volunteers will help provide lunches for the hard-working construction crew during setup and breakdown times.
- **Master Gardener Booth** - Help with plant sales and plant questions.
- **School Tours** - During the first two weeks of Rodeo, school tours will be conducted with children viewing the Little buckaroo Tent exhibits. For these days enthusiastic volunteers are needed to guide the kids and talk with them about the displays.
- **Van Drivers** - Drive the van to and from the Peterson Brothers parking lot to the Little Buckaroo Tent to transport Master Gardener volunteers working in the tent.
- **Watering Team** - Volunteer to help with watering and cleaning up the plants inside the tent.
- **Youth Activities** - Assist with crafts taking place every weekend during rodeo.



JANUARY



Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities

COMMUNITY GARDENS (Code 400)

Green Space Alliance (Code 401) Knowledgeable gardeners are wanted to regularly serve as garden mentors and occasionally help with special gardening projects.

Contact: Tia Moen, Community Outreach Manager at tia@greensatx.org

Location: Varies

Website:

<https://www.greensatx.org/upcoming-events/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities/>
or www.meetup.com/San-Antonio-CG/

Haven for Hope (H4H) (Code 402) BCMGs have been helping to maintain the H4H vegetable and butterfly gardens. Also looking for a few individuals to assist with garden chores and who are available on Tuesday mornings between 8-11am.

Additional times and dates are established as needed. There are two steps required to become a Haven for Hope volunteer as described at the website below. Please inform the staff you are a Master Gardener and are interested in helping in the garden.

MG Contact: Andrew Waring at bcmg58@gmail.com

Location: 1 Haven for Hope Way, San Antonio, TX 78207

Website:

<http://www.havenforhope.org/new/volunteers.aspx>

Herff Farm (Code 403) Volunteer to plant and maintain gardens used for inspiring the public to garden. Teach different ways to garden and how to do it organically. Workdays are Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings (email [Shanna Ciano](mailto:Shanna.Ciano) for exact times); Saturdays from 9am-1pm greet visitors and answer their gardening questions.

MG Contact: Shanna Ciano at shannac@beecreek.net

Location: 33 Herff Road, Boerne TX 78006

Website:

http://www.cibolo.org/difference/vol_section/

SA Food Bank Gardens (Code 404) Help plant, maintain and harvest the gardens at SA Food Bank. For more information, check out the [SA Food Bank Guide for Garden Volunteers](#) at the website below.

MG Contact: Ted Ritchie at tnritch@gmail.com or call: 210-744-4220

Location: 5200 W Old US Hwy 90, San Antonio, TX 78227

Website: <http://safoodbank.org/steps-to-volunteer/>

Schultze Cottage (Code 405) In past years, the Hemisfair Park Cottage was a centerpiece of Master Gardener demonstration gardening and a gardening gift shop. Consider rolling up your sleeves and

Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities, Cont.

working to renew and maintain our cottage as part of San Antonio's redeveloping Hemisfair Park.

MG Contact: Jack Downey at bcmgjack@gmail.com

Location: 514 Hemisfair Park, San Antonio, TX 78205

Wounded Warrior Gardens (Code 406) Join the folks who maintain very special gardens for our seriously injured warriors. These gardens are designed to offer therapy as well as beauty.

MG Contact: Joyce Dare at joyce_dare@satx.rr.com

Location: Warrior & Family Support Center, Bldg. 3628 Rawley E. Chambers Rd., Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234

YOUTH PROGRAMS (Code 980)

Children's Vegetable Garden @ SABOT (Code 980a) All interested and curious volunteers welcome for Fall and Spring programs at the San Antonio Botanical Garden CVG!

MG Contacts: Mary Fernandez at fernandez.m1978@gmail.com, or John Mayer at JMayerUDRetired@yahoo.com, or David Rodriguez at dhrodriguez@ag.tamu.edu

SABOT Contact: Volunteer Coordinator Nadezhda Garza at ngarza@sabot.org or call 210-207-3261 or 210-536-1415

Location: 555 Funston Place, San Antonio, TX 78209

Websites: <http://www.bexarmg.org/what-we-do/childrens-vegetable-garden-program/> <https://www.facebook.com/BexarCountyYouthGardensProgram> <https://bexaryouthgardens.wordpress.com/>

Children's Vegetable Garden @ Hardberger Park (Code 980a) The Phil Hardberger Park

Children's Vegetable Garden is busy with new classes of children planting delicious seasonal vegetables. The garden could use more volunteers in a variety of jobs. The Hardberger Park CVG works with the children on Tuesday mornings, and always needs MGs for the Watering Team.

MG Contact: Mary Cross at mary.cross63@yahoo.com

Location: 1021 Voelcker Lane, San Antonio, TX 78248

Website:

<https://www.philhardbergerpark.org/events/kid-friendly-events/childrens-vegetable-garden/1376-cvg-season-2>

Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Activities (Code 980c)

MG Contact: Ruby Zavala at Ruby.Zavala@ag.tamu.edu

Location: Varies

School Gardens (Adopt-a-School) (Code 980d)

MG Contact: Ruby Zavala at Ruby.Zavala@ag.tamu.edu

Location: Varies

Terrarium Project (Code 980b) Work with children on an age-appropriate, TEKS-based lessons, building a terrarium to keep, and touring the Conservatory. Training is provided.

Contact: SABOT Volunteer Coordinator Nadezhda Garza at ngarza@sabot.org or call 210-207-3261 or 210-536-1415

Location: 555 Funston Place, San Antonio, TX 78209

Youth Speakers Bureau (Code 980g) Take fun gardening activities (insects -- plants -- soils) to a youth garden class!

MG Contact: Ruby Zavala at Ruby.Zavala@ag.tamu.edu

Location: Varies

*Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities, Cont.***ADDITIONAL GARDENING OPPORTUNITIES...**

MG Helping Hands (Code 304) Help BCMG with mailings or other work at our office.

MG Contact: Holly Julian at khollyj@satx.rr.com

Location: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, 3355 Cherry Ridge Drive, Suite 208, 78230

MG Hotline (Code 503) The BCMG Plant Hotline answers phone and email questions daily. It is a very good way to learn about a variety of gardening topics. For those of us who don't tolerate heat well, it's great!

MG Contacts: Jim Strong, jrstrong44@gmail.com and Anne Goode, buagoode@outlook.com

Location: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, 3355 Cherry Ridge Drive, Suite 208, 78230

Website: <http://www.bexarmg.org/what-we-do/bexar-county-master-gardener-hotline/>

MG Speakers Bureau (Code 900) The Speakers' Bureau needs your help! Join the speaker request notification list to volunteer as a Speaker (**Codes: 902=preparation; 903=presentation; 904=tear down**), or as a Speakers Bureau assistant to accompany each speaker on their engagement to manage handouts and sign-in sheets, and to return completed sign-in sheets to the BCMG office (**Code 901**).

MG Contact: Karen Gardner at karen.gardner@bexarmg.org or call 210-571-3903

Location: Varies

Website: <http://www.bexarmg.org/what-we-do/educational-program/>

MG Training Class (Code 202) Tell Lou you would like to serve as a mentor for intern class participants!

MG Contact: Lou Kellogg, bexarmg1@gmail.com

Location: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, 3355 Cherry Ridge Drive, Suite 208, 78230

Websites:

<http://www.bexarmg.org/about/35-2/> and <http://www.bexarmg.org/get-involved/>

Plant Trials (Code 950d) Email David to be added to a list of MGs who will be contacted directly when help is needed for a project.

Contact: David Rodriguez at dhrodriguez@ag.tamu.edu

Locations: Food Bank, San Antonio Botanical Gardens and others as identified.

San Antonio Botanical Garden (Code 800) Master Gardeners can participate in Plant Propagation (**Code 801**) working in the SABOT greenhouse under the direction of Mary Irish, or in General Gardens Help (**Code 802**) which includes various seasonal gardening chores (watering plants, cleaning up plants, dead leaves, deadheading, pruning, etc.).

Contact: SABOT Volunteer Coordinator Nadezhda Garza at ngarza@sabot.org or call 210-207-3261 or 210-536-1415 for day and time information.

Location: 555 Funston Place, San Antonio, TX 78209



SAN ANTONIO BOTANICAL GARDEN 2017 Class Schedule



Gardening & Waterwise Classes In January & February

Participate in Monarch Research at the San Antonio Botanical Garden

Instructor: Mary Kennedy & Mobi Warren

SATURDAY, **JANUARY 21**, 10-11:30AM, MEET AT CARRIAGE HOUSE

Register to participate in scientific research in action. Learn about monarch butterflies and their spring migration from Mexico. Measure monarchs and collect data for the Monarch Larval Monitoring Project. Participants will learn about the parasite which affects monarch butterflies with hands-on citizen science.

Fee: Free with Admission

Certified Arborist Prep Course

FOUR FRIDAYS: **FEBRUARY 3**, 10, 17, 24, 9AM-4PM

This course prepares professional arborists for the ISA Certified exam. Topics: tree biology, identification, tree selection, installation, pruning and oak wilt, tree worker safety, and more. Course offered in partnership with the San Antonio Arborist Association and Alamo Forest Partnership.

Fee: \$250

WaterSaver Walk: Explore the cycle of water conservation for landscapes in San Antonio

Guide: Linda Cace, Master Naturalist

SATURDAY, **FEBRUARY 11**, 10AM MEET AT THE CARRIAGE HOUSE

Join Master Naturalist, Linda Cace for a tour of our WaterSaver gardens and learn about the cycle of water conservation in San Antonio.

Fee: Free with Admission

Easy Roses for Our Busy Lives Class & Pruning Workshop

Instructor: Peggy Jones, Master Gardener and SA Rose Society

SATURDAY, **FEBRUARY 11**, 12-2PM

Come join Master Gardener and SA Rose Society member, Peggy Jones as she discusses disease resistant roses, including Old Garden Roses and Earth Kind roses. Learn how to keep them healthy and what diseases and insects bug roses. This class is a workshop that will demonstrate how to plant and prune roses.

Fee: \$30 (\$27 members)

Native Plant Walk: Texas Hill Country

Guide: Jessica Leslie, Master Naturalist

FRIDAY, **FEBRUARY 17**, 10AM MEET AT THE CARRIAGE HOUSE

Explore our 11-acre Texas Native Trail with a focus on Texas Hill Country. This area has its own distinctive and diverse ecological region of Texas, varying in soil, plant life, topography, and weather. There are more than 250 plant species in collections that represent three ecosystems. In the East Texas Pineywoods, visitors find pines, sweetgum, sassafras, and other acidic soil-loving woodland species. The Hill Country area features live oaks, juniper, Texas mountain laurel, Eve's necklace, Blanco crabapple, Possum Haw, Hop-tree, Uvalde maples, and other limestone tolerant plants. In the South Texas region, dryland trees and thorny brush such as torchwood, Mexican olive, mesquite, Texas ebony, and huisache thrive.

It's Time To Prune! Haircuts for Your Plants Workshop

Instructor: Tom Harris, Master Gardener and Author

SATURDAY, **FEBRUARY 18**, 9:30-11:30AM

Late winter and early spring is the time to prune your plants. Pruning is one of those gardening tasks that most people just can't or won't do. The truth of the matter is, however, that plants actually need some pruning to help them bloom, set fruit, and/or generally prosper...believe it or not. And, they will respond according to how they are pruned. Join this hands-on workshop to learn what to do and what not to do.

Fee: \$30 (\$27 members)

*Class Schedule, Cont.***Gardening in South Texas****Instructor: Mary Irish, Horticulturist and Author****SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 9:30-11AM**

Join horticulturist and author, Mary Irish, as she explores the conditions that drive gardening success in South Texas. Whether you're new to gardening or just new to gardening in South Texas, Mrs. Irish, is a wealth of knowledge. Class topics include soils, rainfall regimes, seasons, and strong emphasis on plant selections in all categories (trees, shrubs, perennials, bulbs, etc.). Mrs. Irish has written ten books, including Texas: Getting Started Garden Guide, Trees and Shrubs for the Southwest, Perennials for the Southwest, and Agaves, Yuccas and Related Plants.

Fee: \$20 (\$18 members)

Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Series In January & February

Bring your appetite...to learn at the Garden. Held on the last Thursday of each month from 11:30am-1pm, this new series will offer expert presentations on a different topic each month.

Lunch and Learn Series: The Branches are Bare: Winter Tree Identification**Winter Tree Identification****Instructor: Mark Kroeze, Texas A&M Forest Service****THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 11:30AM-1PM**

Identifying trees is challenging with leaves on the branches, and even more difficult without the leaves. Learn tricks of the trade from Urban Forester, Mark Kroeze, on how to identify trees in winter. This class is for beginner tree enthusiasts, no prior knowledge necessary.

Fee: \$15 (\$13.50 members) Bring your lunch

Lunch and Learn Series: Butterfly Babies**Instructor: Emma Trester-Wilson, San Antonio Botanical Garden Staff****THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 11:30AM-1PM**

Butterfly babies—aka caterpillars—are found in the Garden if you know where to look! Discover what host plants are, and why they are needed in your butterfly garden. Join us for an indoor presentation followed by a walk to uncover butterfly host plants throughout the Garden. Leave with a host plant for the butterfly babies in your neighborhood.

Fee: \$15 (\$13.50 members) Bring your lunch

Family Drop-In Programs (No pre-registration Necessary) In January & February**Winged Wonders Family Drop-In Program****Second Saturdays, 10 AM-12 PM****JAN 14, FEB 11**

Join us for some hands-on family fun featuring pollinators! Programming will vary but will include activities such as creating a simple craft, playing a game, and taking part in a garden exploration activity.

Fee: Free with Admission

Family Drop-In Programs**Fourth Saturday 10 AM-12 PM****JAN 28, FEB 25**

Join us for some hands-on family fun in the Garden! Programming will vary but will include activities such as creating a simple craft, playing a game, and taking part in a garden exploration activity.

Fee: Free with Admission

Family Flashlight Night**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 6-8:30 PM**

Fee: Free with Admission

From Your Board of Directors...

The BCMG Board is here to serve the Master Gardeners of Bexar County and to assist Bexar County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in providing education opportunities to the community in which we live. Please feel free to contact the Board – or a particular member – with suggestions, ideas, comments, etc.



Minutes – BCMG Board of Directors Meeting November 17, 2016

Call to Order

- Meeting called to order by Jack Downey, November 17, 2016, 4:00 p.m.
- Board Members present: Jack Downey (President), Ruben Lozano (Vice President), Lori Bindseil (Treasurer), Sherry Cantrell (Secretary), Inez Ornelas (Membership), Ann Marie Pease (Member at Large).
- Absent Board Members: Robbie Farmer (Member at Large),.
- Other Attendees: Lou Kellogg (Director of Education), Anna Vogler (Water Conservation), Ruby Zavala (Youth Program Coordinator), Barbara Lutz (Past President), Jaime Daily.

Approval of Minutes for October and September BOD Meetings

- Motion to approve the October minutes made by Ruben; 2nd by Ann Marie. Approved by unanimous acclamation.
- Motion to approve the September minutes made by Ann Marie; 2nd by Inez. Approved by unanimous acclamation.

Youth Program Coordinator Report – Ruby Zavala

- Ruby reported the Kids, Cows, & More event was successful with about 1300 kids in attendance. She had around 12 BCMG volunteers each day.
- The LGEG program is going well and is now in harvest mode.

Water Conservation Report – Anna Vogler

- Anna reported on the SAWS rain barrel coupon event. The 50 gallon rain barrel that will be used for the event was presented and will be shown to the members at the monthly BCMG meeting following today's board meeting. She explained the process of how our organization (and others) can earn \$20 per barrel. When a consumer signs up to purchase a barrel for \$40, they are asked to designate their choice of a non-profit organization (we are listed 3rd). If they selected BCMG, we will earn the \$20 when the barrel is picked up. The event has been limited to one location and will be held January 14 at the Alamo Stadium.

Education Report– Lou Kellogg

- Lou reported he was asked if our organization would be interested in hosting the Southern MG Conference in 2019 or the International Conference in 2020. After some discussion of both events, those present expressed an interest in possibly hosting the International event.
- Lou advised new speakers have been obtained for the next intern class.
- A specialist class on rain harvesting is scheduled for April.

Membership Report– Inez Ornelas

- Inez reported that 40 members have still not reported any hours.
- The cut-off date for reporting is December 31.
- By January 15, archived hours will be removed.

Treasurer's Report – Lori Bindseil and Ruben Lozano

- Lori advised Carols's report is excellent and shows deficit has improved.
- Ruben reported on the process of laddering CDs. From his investigation, he found Randolph Brooks CU to have better rates than banking institutions, but he agreed to check rates from a few more credit unions before a final decision is made. Discussion followed of how to invest the money, with a motion to invest in three \$25K CDs made by Inez; 2nd by Ann Marie. Approved by unanimous acclamation.

Old Business

- Monarch Festival – Jack reported on the success of our participation in the 1st Monarch Festival. We were very busy and sold many plants. He highly recommends our participation in next year's festival.
- Date/Time of Future Board Meetings – Our new policy will be to hold our BOD meeting in conjunction with the monthly general membership BCMG meetings. When the BCMG monthly meeting is held in the afternoon, we will meet at 3:00 pm. When the BCMG meeting is held in the evening, we will meet at 4:00 pm.
- Annual Dues – A motion for the annual dues policy of \$25, payable between January 1 and March 1, was made by Ruben; 2nd by Inez.

Approved by unanimous acclamation. Jack advised he would announce the new dues policy at the monthly BCMG meeting following today's board meeting. In addition, a letter will be distributed to the general membership. A question was raised regarding those who are Honorary members. After some discussion, it was decided those who are Honorary are also expected to pay the dues.

- Master Gardener of the Year – A motion to select the master gardener of the year from a previous Master Gardener of the Month of that current year was made by Ruben; 2nd by Inez. Approved by unanimous acclamation.

New Business

- Member-at-Large – Jack reported Robbie Farmer has resigned as Member-at-Marge. He will publish the vacancy.
- Rodeo or Master Gardener Gardening Show – Jack reported he, David, and Ruby have been attending rodeo meetings and one major point of contention for our continued participation is finances. Ruby's youth grant has been reduced and there are no \$\$s for MGs this year. The rodeo's finance committee is also questioning why the rodeo would pay us to come. A compromise offered by the rodeo was to order our construction materials as needed and have them delivered. BCMG realizes this procedure would only impede our ability to schedule our volunteers and complete our work. With the changes, along with our current deficit, Jack asked us to consider our continued role in the Rodeo and whether we should create another event to promote our mission such as a Master Gardening Show. Discussion ensued and most believed our presence and investment at the rodeo did not promote our education mission as well as a Master Gardener Show could. Ruby raised concerns about pulling our presence from the rodeo. but she was assured she would not be abandoned.
- Christmas party plans are moving along.
- Speakers for BCMG meetings – Jaime reported the following: Ed Bradley in February; Dottie Woodson in March; Baron Richter in April.
- Master Gardener of the Month – November, Ann Vargas; December, Judie Lopez.

- Master Gardener of the Year – Anna, who had been previously selected, requested to withdraw her name from consideration, as she felt uncomfortable with the selection since she is currently serving in a paid position. Jack Downey was selected. No motion was made but approval was given by unanimous acclamation.

Upcoming BOD Meeting

- Date and time for next BOD meeting is January 19, 2016, 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned by Jack Downey, November 17, 2016.

Sherry Cantrell

Secretary

Jack Downey

President

**In Cooperation with
Bexar County Commissioners
Court:**

Nelson W. Wolff,
County Judge

Sergio "Chico"
Rodriguez,
Commissioner
Precinct 1

Paul Elizondo,
Commissioner
Precinct 2

Kevin A. Wolff,
Commissioner
Precinct 3

Tommy Calvert,
Commissioner

**BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

President
Jack Downey
President@bexarmg.org

Vice President
Ruben Lozano
vp@bexarmg.org

Treasurer
Lori Bindseil
Treasurer@bexarmg.org

Secretary
Sherry Cantrell
Secretary@bexarmg.org

Membership
Inez Ornelas
Membership@bexarmg.org

Members-at-Large
VACANT
Member1@bexarmg.org
Ann Marie Pease
Member2@bexarmg.org

Immediate Past President
Barbara Lutz
PastPresident@bexarmg.org

To Send an E-mail to the entire Board



**BCMG Board of Directors
Meeting**

Thurs., Jan. 19, 3:30 pm - 6 pm
[3355 Cherry Ridge Dr., San Antonio](#)

Meetings are held monthly. Members can request items to be added to the agenda by emailing the President, President@bexarmg.org at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

All members are welcome to observe the meetings, however in order to accommodate seating, please email the President that you will be attending.

JUST ONE MORE ...



Scarecrow Trail 2016 AND THE WINNERS ARE...



FIRST PLACE
Mitchell Lake Audobon Center
Socially Hawkward



SECOND PLACE
Garden Gate Gift Shop
Bonita Botanica



TIED FOR THIRD PLACE!
Inspire Community Fine Arts
Frieda and Her Crows



TIED FOR THIRD PLACE!
Bexar County Master Gardeners
Holy Pollinators, Batman!

What is a Master Gardener?

Bexar County Master Gardeners are trained, certified volunteers who support the educational horticulture programs and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service in Bexar County. We work with County Extension Agent-Horticulture David Rodriguez to help create and maintain gardens that showcase plants for our area; help with trial gardens and field research; share planting, composting, and irrigation methods; present information at garden and trade events; answer horticultural inquiries over the telephone; organize and/or present educational programs to various groups; introduce children to gardens through programs in schools and the Children's Vegetable Garden; and increase awareness of integrated pest management, water conservation, and other environmental stewardship issues.

Master Gardener training sessions are held in spring. Classes are usually held on Wednesdays from 12 pm to 4 pm. After acceptance into the program, intern students are required to submit to a background check, attend the 13-week course, and complete 50 hours of volunteer service within a year before they are certified as a Master Gardener. Lectures by experts in their field, hands-on activities, and field trips make up the classroom experience. A large variety of volunteer activities offered throughout the year provide ample opportunity to complete the service requirement. After initial certification, Master Gardeners are required to complete 30 hours of service and 6 continuing education hours each year to re-certify.

Learning and teaching others is the Bexar County Master Gardener mission. We are "hands-on" gardeners who are interested in sharing all aspects of gardening with anyone who will listen.

From The Editor...

"You cannot go through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." - Jane Goodall

Great Expectations

At the end of every complete trip around the sun we have the opportunity to "start fresh" - a new year presents itself with new possibilities for change and new beginnings. We make a commitment to start a new diet, begin a new exercise regime, complete an unfinished project or perhaps tend to a neglected garden. Some people even decide to make more drastic changes - moving or switching jobs (or careers). And with those changes there is the hope that it will result in change for a better life - great expectations for a better future.

The problem is that doesn't always happen. That's not to say that there is anything wrong with making resolutions, or setting goals with the intent of keeping those promises to oneself (or others), or hoping that moving to a new place or changing jobs may be just the thing to get back on track with goals or dreams that haven't come to fruition just yet. However, the more you live your life in the realm of "great expectations" - the "when this happens...then I'll be (fill in the blank: happy, content, satisfied, successful, etc.)" the less likely it may happen because the only way to get to that "happy place" is to live your life as if you're already there. In other words, don't keep waiting for it to happen.

At the end of every year most of us look back and evaluate how we did and, if we're honest, most of us fall a little short of the goals we set for ourselves. So, we try again. But, what if we tried something different this year? Instead of writing up a list of things we need to accomplish in the future to reach that place of peace deep within us after we accomplish whatever it is we think will make us "complete," why not just be content right now, in this moment? Because the reality is, this is the only moment that we really have control over - the only one that counts.

As the year progresses, we start making excuses as our goals aren't met the way we had hoped; we tweak our plans to make them fit our immediate needs and wants and pretty soon we're at the end of another year and the hope is renewed, once again, as we write another list and make plans for another year that will be "better" than the past one. In reality, what we are doing is putting things off until "tomorrow," thinking that we will always have another chance to get it right.

Don't wait. Throw the list the away. LIFE IS GOOD, NOW. Live every moment fully and with purpose. Take the vacation - even if the "vacation" is a walk around the block with

From the Editor, Cont.

your dog, but do it with purpose and be present. Don't make a resolution to be a kinder person 'later,' be one NOW, in this moment. It's okay to let the person merging onto the highway to get in front of you even if you are running a little late. It's okay not to plant the huge vegetable garden you had planned on your resolution list, just plant the carrots, which are your favorite.

If you really want to keep your 2017 New Year's resolutions, only make one: live each moment to the fullest as if it is the only one you have - because it is.

"No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant."

- Anne Lamott

Your Editor,
Kimber Briggs