



Message from the President

Dear Fellow Master Gardeners,

Our annual budget has decreased from in excess of \$120,000 a year to approximately \$66,000. This precipitous decrease has made some hard decisions necessary by the Board of Directors, and I thank all of you for your support of those difficult reductions.

To replace some of our lost revenue and increase the community awareness of the Bexar County Master Gardeners, the Board of Directors has approved two signature events that we hope will become annual events that the community looks forward to each year.

The first is our September 16th gardening exposition titled “CULTIVATE!”. **Anna Vogler** is chairing the event with **Liz Campanella**. SAWS is providing financial support.

Nine seminars presented by Master Gardeners will bring information on water conservation, plant selection, and proper gardening techniques. Borrowing from Pecha Kucha, twenty-minute workshops will be offered on the stage for quick “how-to” lessons. Texas Superstar plants will be offered in our plant sale area. A raffle will be held for three distinct landscape pots – shade, sun and succulents. We hope to bring other gardening organizations and gardening-focused vendors to our vendor area so that we have a rich and broad display of gardening acumen and interest.

We need your assistance to make this inaugural CULTIVATE! a great success. We have lots of jobs – some that require interaction with the public, like our registration desk, information desk, plant sales, food sales, and raffle sales. Others are more behind-the-scenes, like our needed signage coordinator and parking lot attendants. **Liz Davenport** has taken on the task of our Volunteer Coordinator. She can be reached at (210) 859-0861 or donasofa@hotmail.com.

Let’s all step forward and help in the work necessary to putting on a great event. Much of the pre-event work can be done from home on the telephone. Please contact Anna or either of the Lizzes to offer your assistance.

Take Care,

*Jack Downey, President
Bexar County Master Gardeners*



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**COME AND HEAR FRAN HUTCHINS, DIRECTOR OF THE BRACKEN CAVE PRESERVE,
TELL US ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MEXICAN FREE-TAILED BAT!**

Fran has been with Bat Conservation International since 2006, directing educational bat flight programs and the restoration work on BCI's Bracken Cave Preserve and working with Central Texas landowners protecting other bat roosts. His work at the preserve protects the largest colony of bats in the world.

Fran frequently speaks, sharing his passion for informing the public about bats at schools and zoos and with Scouts and organizations from around the world. He has been featured on Texas Country Reporter, Travel Channel, several documentaries, as well as Texas Highway Magazine.

In 2013 Fran was recognized by the US Forest Service for Wings Across the Americas / BatsLIVE education program. He is also a Caver and Texas Master Naturalist and Eagle Scout.



Bracken Cave: <http://www.batcon.org/our-work/regions/usa-canada/protect-mega-populations/bracken-cave>

Donation page: https://www.batcon.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&layout=edit&id=1056

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Hello Fellow Master Gardeners,

I hope you are all staying out of this heat! I think everyone is ready for cooler temperatures, or at least some much needed rain.

This month, I would like to tell you all about a program that a small group of Master Gardeners has helped initiate. This program is designed to work with homeowner associations in our area to educate residents on proper landscaping techniques, plant selection and care, as well as water conservation. We began working with SAWS and the Roseheart neighborhood, on the Northeast side of San Antonio. We worked with the HOA committee regarding the neighborhood common areas and with an educational booth at one of their community events. We offered individual landscape reviews where Master Gardeners walked the landscapes with these residents. A team of two or three Master Gardeners spent 45 minutes helping to address the specific challenges these homeowners were facing with their maturing landscapes, and offered suggestions using the Earth-Kind principles and water conservation techniques. These landscape reviews were very well received by the residents, and many of them have already seen results following the advice they were given. The Master Gardeners who volunteered really enjoyed the opportunity to see different properties and give advice to improve these landscapes.

We plan to continue this program and offer it to other HOA's around the city. If you know of an HOA that might be interested, or if you would like to participate as a volunteer with this program, please contact me via email at anna.vogler@bexarmg.org. I think you will find this a fun way to meet our mission of educating our community.

Conservationally Yours,

Anna Vogler

Water Conservation Coordinator



MASTER GARDENER GARDEN STARS
Awards for the Achievements of Our Fellow Master Gardeners



HURRAH for the following Bexar County Master Gardeners who, as of July 25th, have achieved their 2017 Master Gardener Certification.

They have earned the 2017 Cowboy Boot Pin by volunteering 30+ hours & completing six CEU hours, including three required hrs from attending BCMG monthly meetings.



Pins can be picked up at the monthly CEU meetings. Email [Susan Noonan](#) for other delivery options.

**Lucille Almaguer
Liz Davenport
Sharon Kilmer
John Maldonado**

**LaVunn Mims
Keeley Porter
Tom Thompson
Mary Valdez**

**Richard Valdez
John Vann
Ben Wyatt**

BCMG Needs Two Special Volunteers!



1. The Board is seeking members who are interested filling our now vacant **Vice President** position (unfortunately, Jesse Valdez has resigned for health reasons). Please understand that serving in this position would provide experience for a nominee to potentially serve as President for the coming year.
2. The **Scion Editor** position is still open. Our monthly publication needs you to gather and present our gardening news, columns and articles! We have set up a Google Drive workspace and if you might like to join our current co-editor arrangement, that would be welcome.

Please contact [President Jack Downey](#) or telephone (210) 771-7312 for all the details.

NOTE: Our next Master Gardener recognition will occur in September as
MASTER GARDENER OF THE AUTUMN SEASON!

Mark your calendars for David Rodriguez's next : U`Æ Y[YhUV YÆ UfXYb]b[Æ GYa]bUfg: [Part 1](#) on Sat, Aug 26 (10am to Noon) & [Part 2](#) on Sat, Sep 9 (10:30am to Noon) at Milberger's!

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.; email contact information available on the [BCMG website](#).



Minutes – BCMG Board of Directors (BoD) Meeting – July 20, 2017 (Board Reviewed by Email; Formal Approval @ Aug 17th BOD Meeting)

1. Call to Order

- a. Meeting called to order by President Jack Downey, July 20, 2017, 3:35 pm; agenda (Atch 1).
- b. Board Members Present: Jack Downey (President), Lori Bindseil (Treasurer), Ann Marie Pease (Secretary), Lisa Nixon (Membership Director), John Maldonado (Member at Large)
- c. Board Member Absent: Marybeth Parsons (Member at Large); Vice President (position vacant)
- d. Other Attendees: David Rodriguez (CEA), Lou Kellogg (Education Director), Anna Vogler (Water Conservation Coordinator), Ruby Zavala (Youth Gardens Coordinator)

2. Approval of Minutes for the June 2017 BoD Meeting: Motion to approve the June minutes was made by Lori and seconded by John; approved by unanimous acclamation.

3. County Extension Agent (CEA) Report – David Rodriguez

- a. Briefed the group on the currently-approved equal opportunity language which must appear on all Texas A&M AgriLife materials: “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.”
- b. David also addressed the financial management relationship of Extension and external support groups, such as BCMG (Atch 2). He discussed internal controls, accountability, and oversight. He noted that BCMG was meeting all of the requirements for management of funds.

4. Youth Gardens Coordinator Report – Ruby Zavala

- a. Over 300 children have attended youth garden summer camp programs this summer; one more camp will be held in early August.
- b. Junior Master Gardener Adult Leader Training will be held next week, 26-28 July. Twenty-four teachers are registered, including a number of high school teachers. Anna offered to provide a short presentation to the attendees on the upcoming Fall Educational Seminar.

5. Water Conservation Report – Anna Vogler

- a. The Fall Educational Seminar will be held September 16, 2017, at First Church of the Nazarene, 10715 West Avenue, SA 78213. A good number of volunteers are enthusiastically working to make this first effort a success. Anna provided some graphics of a logo for review. The group agreed to change the title from Sustain to Cultivate. A number of other non-profits will be participating and providing 20 minutes garden topic demonstrations.
- b. Scanning handouts is nearly complete and the work will begin next week to upload them to the BCMG website.
- c. The Fall Home & Garden Show (Sep 29-Oct 1 at the Alamodome) has agreed to provide all required parking passes for BCMG volunteers for this event.

6. Education Report – Lou Kellogg will be helping Ruby at the Junior Master Gardener Adult Leader Training next week.

7. Membership Report – Lisa Nixon

- a. The Membership Report as of July 1, 2017 (Atch 3) was emailed to all Board members and provided analysis Volunteer hours. Lisa has sent individual emails out to each member to validate the data and indicating any special attention that was needed in completing the reporting process in VMS.
- b. Lisa's report also provided current, detailed information on 12 VMS projects (Codes 401, 402, 403, 404, 407, 408, 800, 801, 802, 980c, 980i, 980j) which do not focus on our mission "..to educate the public on water conservation and research-based proper gardening techniques and practices as developed by Texas A&M AgriLife." The TMGA Handbook specifically prohibits "maintenance" projects. Following discussion, the Board members unanimously agreed to eliminate the 12 projects from the ongoing BCMG volunteer opportunities with an effective date of September 1, 2017. All hours recorded by members during January through August 2017 will remain in VMS.
- c. David and Jack confirmed that members can record their hours for 2017 using VMS up to December 31, 2017. However, members are encouraged to record their hours as they work/earn them!

8. Treasurer's Report – Lori Bindseil

- a. Reports were not sent out prior to the Board meeting. Lori advised the Board that many receipts due in over the last six months have finally started to arrive. The outlook at the beginning of the new Fiscal Year has improved.
- b. Credit Card Implementation Status. Square account (transaction fee is 2.75%) is up and running and the reader for use at Point of Sale events (plant sales, etc.) is available in the office. Kate Radomski is still working on a short instruction sheet that will be available for Square users. The PayPal (2.2% transaction fee + \$0.30 and no monthly fee for non-profits) account has been set up; banking verification complete; and awaiting notice of non-profit status for the account. PayPal buttons will be added to the BCMG website for donations, online apparel sales, yearly dues, etc.

9. Old Business: Change of Fiscal Year. At this evening's meeting, the membership will vote to approve the change to the Bylaws setting the BCMG fiscal year as January 1 to December 31. The next steps involve submission of a form to the Secretary of State, establishment of a temporary six-month budget (on which Lori is working), and a call for elections in December for a new Board term to begin January 1, 2018.

10. New Business

- a. Replacement of Vice President. Jack explained that owing to medical reasons Jesse Valdez has resigned from his position as Vice President. The board agreed this is a very sad loss. Jack encouraged the members to seek out a member for this now vacant position with an understanding that serving in this position will provide experience for a nominee to potentially serve as President for the coming Calendar Year.
- b. Approval of Mission Statement. "As the volunteer educational arm of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the mission of the Bexar County Master Gardeners is to educate our community and surrounding areas on water conservation and research-based gardening practices and techniques as developed by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of the Texas A&M University System." Lori offered a motion to approve the mission statement with the added wording (per David's advice) to include "of the Texas A&M University System." The motion was seconded by John and approved by unanimous acclamation.
- c. Conflict of Interest Form. Jack provided all Board members with a copy of this form (Atch 4) for review and completion by the next Board Executive meeting which was set by the members present for 10:30am on Monday, July 31.

- d. Board Self-Assessment Form. Jack also provided the board members copies of this form (Atch 5) for review and completion prior to the July 31st meeting.
- e. Process for Master Gardener (MG) of the Month. Timing of selection: Ann Marie Caldwell, who authors our articles on the MG of the Month and also secures a photo for the Scion and website, needs early notification of the selection to allow time for her to arrange an interview and then write the article. Source of potential members for recognition: 1) know which members are volunteering at a rate above the required annual volunteer hours; 2) balance those names with the list of members who have already been recognized as MGs of the Month; 3) selection discussion by board members with their observations and recommendations. David asked whether recognition that occurred every quarter rather than monthly would be worth considering. A good discussion resulted in changing the monthly recognition to a Master Gardener of the Season with the Board making selections at its July, October, January and April meetings for recognition to occur in the Scion Newsletters for September, December, March and June. Using data provided by Lisa and Ann Marie, a selection was made for recognition to be made in the September Scion.
- f. Speaker of the Month for August. Fran Hutchins of the Bracken Cave Preserve will speak on the importance of the Mexican Free-Tailed Bat.

11. President's Report

- a. San Antonio Area Foundation Grant. Jack has submitted a grant application for \$32,500 for funding of a van, computer tablets, and support for the handout library to be available on the BCMG website.
- b. HEB Grant. Another grant application requesting \$6500 is underway to support the educational potential of our website via the handout library and other potential initiatives.
- c. GuideStar "Gold" Status. GuideStar gathers and disseminates information about every single IRS-registered nonprofit organization. Based on the work Jack has accomplished to date, BCMG is a gold-level GuideStar participant. Jack explained that the Executive session of the Board on July 31st will serve to provide an orientation for new board members and to complete the initial self-assessment which will again be completed at the end of the board term, as well as return of the Confidentiality form. These actions are part of preparing the organization to apply for Platinum status with GuideStar.
- d. New Gardening Library. Jack announced that the BCMG now has a Gardening Library of 100 books located in the office for checkout. All the books were donated by Ms. Jerry Guyton.

12. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned by Jack Downey at 4:50pm, July 20, 2017.
- b. Date for the next BOD meeting is Thursday, August 17, 2017 at 3:30 pm.

Ann Marie Pease
 Secretary

Jack Downey
 President

5 Attachments (**too large for inclusion in The Scion**)

- 1. Agenda for July 20, 2017 Board of Directors Meeting
- 2. Financial Management: Following the Trail
- 3. Membership Report as of July 1, 2017
- 4. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy and Disclosure Form
- 5. 2017-2018 BCMG Board Self-Assessment

Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Updates Page

Here's what our special JMG-trained volunteers & Bexar County Master Gardeners have done for the Youth Gardens Program & some new volunteer opportunities with kids.

Thank you very much to all the JMG-trained volunteers & Bexar County Master Gardeners who helped out at the NISD, Pan American, and Biblio Tech Summer Garden Camps.

We saw over 300 students and taught them about plant life cycles, terrariums, insects, composting, parts of a flower and what plants give us, snakes, birds, worms, insects, and lots of gardening activities. Thank you for everything and thank you for the great summer!

Thank you to all the JMG-trained volunteers & Bexar County Master Gardeners who helped out at our 2017 Summer Junior Master Gardener Adult Leader Training.

We had a great turnout of 27 youth garden educators! The participants learned about different "hands-on" group and individual learning experiences that will provide many youth gardens around the nation with cool and fun learning experiences.

A special thank you to our youth garden educators for all of the incredible work they are doing with children and youth across the country.



Another great season is about to start at the Children's Vegetable Garden. Be sure to join us at orientation!

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CVG Volunteer Orientation
Saturday, August 5th
10:30 am – 12:00 noon
Children's Vegetable Garden Education Room (located front right of SABOT entrance)
By 1.5 hours
Volunteers who wish to volunteer @ the Fall 2017 CVGP but cannot attend orientation, email Denise Perez dsperez@ag.tamu.edu and Mary Fernandez fernandez.m1978@gmail.com.



