



# The Guadalupe Gardener

DECEMBER 2010

AgriLIFE EXTENSION  
Texas A&M System

A monthly publication of the Guadalupe County Master Gardeners in cooperation with the Texas AgriLIFE Extension, Guadalupe County

## NOTES FROM THE GARDEN - of Linda Bruno, President



My last column as President and I wanted to say something profound and inspirational about working hard next year and all the events coming up, etc. etc. But then I started thinking about our Master Gardeners who work behind the scenes, doing all the administrative stuff and keeping us all sorted out. So I'm going to talk about them instead.

When you come in for the regular meetings, that's Doug Biggs moving tables and chairs. He's done a wonderful job finding interesting people to talk about various subjects over the last three years and our increased member attendance at the meetings has reflected that. Ryla Cottingham and Betty Hughes, along with the monthly refreshment volunteers, make sure everything is set up and looking inviting for the social part of our meeting, a welcome that everyone appreciates as they walk in. And the ladies are there cleaning up when everyone is leaving.

Mondays, upstairs in the Master Gardener office, Esther Pinter and Betty keep us well organized. Everything is boxed and labeled and the ladies are always ready to guide volunteers to help with everything from running copies for classes and lectures to packaging seeds. That's along with answering phone calls and doing research to answer people's questions.

And then there is Dale Odvody. You know him as the guy who gets your hours report. He takes those hours, compares them to other sign in sheets and posts them to his big spreadsheet. And then he puts all that together for reports to the Board and the AgriLife Extension Agent, the TMGA and Texas A&M. He nags people who haven't sent in hours so he can do more posting. Ann Odvody helps with this process; she's better at reading difficult handwriting, which is a good thing because he wouldn't have time to do anything else if she didn't - like send out funny email notices about our meetings and other

(continued in column 2)

## HOE! HOE! HOE!

It's time to put the pumpkins away and begin to deck the halls! We are excited about hosting the Christmas Social and look forward to meeting our fellow gardeners. As you know from the classes and meetings there is always good food and this will be no exception! Come early for appetizers but don't overdo it because a delicious meal of Turkey and Ham with all the "pot luck" trimmings will be served buffet style.

We will be collecting nonperishable food items for the Christian Cupboard and unwrapped toys for the Blue Santa Program. Santa's helpers have told us that while all donations are appreciated for children from birth thru 12 years the age groups that do not get enough are for ages 0-2 and 10-12. They can also use donations of scissors, tape and batteries. Santa will be making a visit to pick up the donations the night of the party. You may be able to slip Santa a wish list of your own!

Volunteer elves have been busy creating decorations for our tables. It's a secret who they are because you will have a chance to purchase votes for your favorite table (50/50 draw).

There could be more surprises so be sure to RSVP by Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> if you have not done so already. Invitation is on page 3.

(continued from column 1)  
announcements - and put together the membership roster that he sends you.

We don't get to see Randee Malmsten much but her touch is felt every time someone opens the Master Gardener website. As our webmaster, she has worked hard to stay on top of all the changes the TMGA and A&M have made in the last few months, including learning new software so she can keep our website updated. It's a work in progress but the new site is definitely starting to look like us.

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# Association News

## November Meeting Program



Tom and Nancy Krause, fellow Master Gardeners and members of the San Antonio Bonsai Society, provided a discussion and demonstration of bonsai plants at our November meeting. Bonsai is a Japanese word meaning something growing in a shallow container, essentially a tree in a pot.



Historically, the Chinese were the first known to practice this art. The Japanese popularized it and lent the name to it. They believe that the bonsai is something to be appreciated as natural, living and growing. This type of tree fitted the rather small and crowded dwellings the Japanese generally had.

By proper care the bonsai tree can survive for many years, some being more than fifty years old. Growing bonsai is considered to be an art which expresses in miniature the beauty of natural tree forms. Thus we have a natural object made small for aesthetic reasons and, essentially, for commercial purposes as well. Certain very old bonsai trees are considered to be masterpieces and are worth considerable sums of money to collectors.

Tom and Nancy brought a number of bonsai plants for demonstration. These included: *Ficus benjamina*, *Serissa foetida* (snow rose), Texas ebony, *Portulacaria afra* (from Africa), *Bougainvillea*, Boxwood, Crape Myrtle, Juniper, *Crassula falcata* (Jade), Elm, Japanese Maple, Bromliad, Jessamine, Dwarf Yaupon Holly, and Honeysuckle.

Bonsai can be grown from wild seedlings or propagated by cuttings, layering, grafting, or dividing roots. Care must be taken as with any plant to protect the exposed area to ensure viability.

Tom uses a kiddie pool to prepare the soils needed to ensure air permeability and provide good drainage. He uses a good grade compost with such additives as lava rock, fine pine bark, and green sand. The soil needs to be light yet hold water to meet the plants needs. Watering every day may be necessary in hot weather.

Bonsai take on many shapes; different trunk styles, root styles, branch shapes, and planting styles are involved. They need to be properly groomed which is generally referred to as training. Some of these training techniques are as follows: pinching buds, leaf cutting, pruning, and wiring. Pinching buds is a method of controlling undersized new growth. Leaf cutting should be performed on healthy trees of species vigorous enough to undergo this type of treatment. The purpose is to increase the number of branches and to force a new crop of smaller and more beautiful leaves. Pruning is done to remove certain branches or roots that detract from the appearance of the bonsai. Wiring is performed to correct certain defects or misshapes. Copper wire is best for coniferous trees while aluminum wire should be used for deciduous trees.

Tom reported that organic fertilizers should be used to supply the microbes which in turn provide nourishment for the plants. He uses organic fertilizers obtained from Garden Ville (Malcolm Beck) or a spray of Medina Hasta Grow.

Repotting is necessary every two or three years and care must be taken to remove the dirt from around the roots. Fresh soil is then repacked around the roots. This is a rather tedious and time consuming task.

Expensive tools can be purchased for trimming and cutting processes. Scissors can be used for light tasks. Pots were at one time expensive but with more production are coming down in price.

Tom talked about a beautiful exhibit of bonsai native trees located near Wimberley. For those interested in bonsai trees, this would be a worthwhile visit.

Tom and Nancy can be contacted at 830-401-0933 for more information about bonsai. They will gladly provide information on how to join the San Antonio Bonsai Society.

**GCMG MEMBERS AND GUESTS**

*Santa's making a list and checking it twice.*

*He's gonna find out which Master Gardener*

*Has been naughty or nice!*

*So sharpen your tools and clean your rake,*

*Please turn in your volunteer hours for Dale's sake!*

*Spruce yourself up and prepare your favorite holiday dish.*

*Please come to the Christmas Social and share a garden wish!*

**Friday, December 10, 2010**

**6PM to 10PM**

**Catholic Daughters of America Facility**

**616 S. Austin St. Seguin, Texas**

*(Parking in rear E lot across Camp St. Party is on the  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor ~ an elevator is available.)*

*In the spirit of the holidays if you want to help Santa spread cheer please  
bring nonperishable food items for the Christian Cupboard or an  
unwrapped toy for the Blue Santa program. Santa will make a visit to pick  
up the toys so that his helpers can get them wrapped!*

*If you have not made it to any of the functions to RSVP or you have  
any questions please contact*

*Debbie Lowe ~ [debbie.lowe@abtexasna.com](mailto:debbie.lowe@abtexasna.com) or 830-914-4434 or*

*Kathy Pape ~ [wpape@satx.rr.com](mailto:wpape@satx.rr.com) or 830-379-9597*



## NEWLY CERTIFIED MASTER GARDENERS



**Peggy Love** is shown receiving her hard won master gardeners certificate from President (and birthday girl) Linda Bruno at the November meeting.

At the October meeting, **Nancy Cude** was newly certified while **Carmen Rosas** was transferred in from Nueces County. My apologies to both Nancy and Carmen for not mentioning them in the last newsletter. We are truly happy to have them join us as Guadalupe County Master Gardeners



The **KWED Lawn & Garden Show** on Saturday, November 20th, was all about *Christmas Trees!* Host for that Saturday show, Ryla Cottingham, joined with George Ammermann, both Guadalupe County Master Gardeners, to welcome Jeffery Seiler of Seiler Christmas Tree Farm on Hwy 123 South (830-303-4130) and Harvey Vogel of Vogel's Tannenbaum Farm East, 500 Tannenbaum Lane on Hwy 46 (830-372-4335) to the show. (Pictured Left to Right: Jeffery Seiler, Harvey Vogel, and our own George Ammermann.) Did you know that deer

DO like to browse some types of trees grown for Christmas trees? And did you know that just *ONE ACRE* of growing Christmas trees makes enough oxygen for a year for eighteen people as well as provides a safe spot for birds and other wildlife to rest and reproduce? A suggestion from the tree "experts" on what to do with your tree after the holidays is to put it in your tank or lake (if you have one) for the fish and wildlife OR you can allow the city to pick it up to make great mulch from it. Jeffery and Harvey agree that you should trim off a bit of the end of your tree when you get it home (if it hasn't been already set in a permanent stand at the farm) and give it plenty of plain ol' water in the bowl area of the stand. Make sure you don't let the bowl area dry up....keep plenty of water in there.....live trees are very thirsty. And that will make you and your family safer when you keep your tree green and moist. We asked Harvey & Jeff if putting things like sugar, an aspirin, or any number of things people put in the water, helps the tree stay green longer, and their answer was a resounding "*no!*" Apparently tests have been conducted on different ingredients and there was no proof from the testing that they helped extend the life of the tree. Just regular water does the trick. For more information, the website to the Seiler tree farm is: <http://seilerschristmastrees.com> and the Vogel's Tannenbaum Farm is: <http://vogelstannenbaumfarms.com>. **So enjoy your live trees during this wonderful holiday season!**

## Cibolo Ag Fair - November 4th & 5th

We had a very successful Master Gardener exhibit Thursday and Friday at the Cibolo Ag fair held at Toby Connor Agriculture Complex in Cibolo.

On Nov 4th, 474 fourth grade children from Green Valley, Paschal and Sippel Elementary Schools participated. On Nov 5th 430 fourth grade children from Rose Garden, Schertz, Watts and Wiederstein elementary schools attended.

A big thanks is extended to Peggy Jones for getting HEB to donate apples for the children,. It was a great hit and enjoyed by all. Special thanks to MGs, David and Peggy Love and Jim Johnson for helping yours truly, Bob Davis, present the basics and importance of fruits and vegetables to the children and thanks to the teachers and for their interaction with the children. Without volunteers this effort would be impossible to complete.



Jim Johnson & Bob Davis



Dave Love



Peggy Love

## Texas Agricultural Education and Heritage Center Ag Fair Oct. 12-28, 2010

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners were stationed in the vegetable garden area of the center from approximately 9 to 2 during the 11 days over three weeks of Ag Fair. They were responsible for speaking to each group of children for about twenty minutes at a time as the children moved through twelve stations throughout the center. A Master Gardener plus a student or intern was usually assigned for each day.

The first week MGs spoke to 812 children a total of 43 times during eighteen hours.

The second week MGs spoke to 810 children a total of 38 times during eighteen hours.

The third week MGs spoke to 600 children a total of 30 times during fifteen hours.

This comes out to 2,222 children, 111 contact sessions, and fifty-one total hours.

In addition at a different station, I spoke to 2,222 children in 111 contact sessions over 51 hours.

Eleven of our Master Gardeners participated, with eight of our students or interns, including Jeri Doyle (who worked two days), Sandy Foss (who worked two days), Peggy Jones, Jan Quello, Gillian Siemans, Suzanne Brown, Dave Love, Doug Biggs, Jim and Gail Johnson, and Stan Wieding. The students were Peggy Love, Gretchen Ricker, Jerilyn Preston, Mary Jeanne Lucky, Linda Crees, Barbara Gettig, Gail Kiehn, and Tom Krause. Thank you all very much. I greatly appreciate the time and effort you put into this. Thanks also to you who offered to do backup if needed.

Next year's dates for you to put on your calendar are October 10-14, 17-21, and 24-28 of 2011.

Clara Mae Marcotte, Chairman

## Update on the Schertz Community Garden



What a great day to plant fruit trees – crisp and clear. Mark Fanick of Fanick's Garden Center was at the Garden on Saturday, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> to talk about how to plant fruit trees. We had pre-dug the holes to Mark's specs and were ready to put in six trees. Mark demonstrated technique on the first one to go in and then stayed to help us put in the other five. He donated the compost and other amendments to the soil, gave us back a percentage from the trees he sold and then gave us a wonderful price on our six trees. We have designated Mark Fanick as a true Friend of the Garden for his contributions and his support of the Guadalupe County Master Gardeners.

Tuesday work days continue with new beds scheduled to go in. We are taking broccoli, greens and beans to RACAP. The green tomatoes will be picked and put up to ripen before the next cold front. Thanks to all the volunteers who have shown up to work but we could use more people, especially for the next bed construction. Watch your email for schedule updates.

A very big THANK YOU to Dale and Ann Odvody. They have been at the Garden to cover and uncover, water and do other chores (and according to Joe, move those big cement blocks) and are a big part of the success of the Garden.

## Green Team



## The Seguin Green Team

The Green Team has been busy - in November we did a lot of weeding and grooming; however, the highlight of this month's activities was the pruning of all the cedar elms in the street extensions in downtown Seguin. We also trimmed the crepe myrtles and tried to "shape up" the little struggling walnut tree in the German bed in Central Park. Since the weed growing season has hopefully come to an end (or at least slowed down) there won't be much on our agenda for December. It's good to have the Team up and running again. We enjoy working together and learning from each other.

Hughlene Micheli

## HOURS - SEND IN YOUR HOURS - HOURS

Golly, it's that time of year for more good food and good cheer and I hate to nag, but, as the other shoe drops and makes a startling thud on the floor, about a third of our supposed active membership (those who paid 2010 dues) and about two-thirds of our students have yet to report any hours for 2010. Do they have hours to report? Some of them do. I know for sure. They signed in at meetings and work projects and volunteered for and worked places I worked. However, surprise upon all surprises, they (you) are responsible for reporting their (your) own hours in a timely fashion. We need members, students, and interns to report all their hours through December 31 ASAP. We have a reporting requirement to the Guadalupe County Commissioners, Texas Master Gardeners, and Texas A&M the first week in January 2011. It is important that we report as many hours as possible. For example, for 2009, we reported 9,611 hours to the Guadalupe County Commissioners, which equates to 4.6 person years for the county. This year, the county was notified by the state they were going to take a 10% budget cut for 2011. One of the methods they were going to use to make up for the budget cut was deleting one of the county *AgriLife* extension agent's positions which would have adversely affected the support the agents could provide us Master Gardeners. The commissioners took in account all the help we provided the county (it is computed at an average manpower rate of \$21.47 per hour) and decided to take the budget cuts in other areas and fund the extension agent's salary. To date (November 25, 2010), we only have 8,157 hours reported. So, you can see we need all the hours we can get. Reporting volunteer and advance training hours is not rocket science. And if you haven't reported any hours yet, you don't have to wait until the last minute. Report what you have now and play catch-up at the end of the year. Send them to: Dale Odvody [odvodyd@swbell.net](mailto:odvodyd@swbell.net) or 4715 FM 2538, Marion TX 78124 or, if you want to fax them, call first. The fax and the modem and the phone are all the same line 830-914-3593.

### Members in Service

#### Texas Master Gardener Board of Directors

Gail Johnson – Two Year Term

Deedy Wright – One Year Term

Jim Johnson - Alternate, Two Year Term

Pat Schultze - Alternate, One Year Term

November meeting refreshments were provided by Nancy Krause, George Ammermann, Pat Schultze, Beth Zies and Betty Hughes. Lucky Jerilyn Preston again won the \$19.50 raffle. Merv Cook won the \$10 Maldonado gift certificate.

### FUTURE PROGRAMS

Dec 10 - Christmas Social

Jan 20 - Growing Avocado Trees - Bill Schneider - Avocado tree producer

Feb 17 - Benefits of Eating Fruits & Vegetables - Patty Glenn Leander - Nutritionist and writer for Texas Gardener

Mar 17 - Composting - Andy Chidster, employee of "The Natural Gardeners, Inc." manufacturers of Lady Bug products

Apr 21 - Pollinators - Monta Zengerle - Master Naturalist and member of the Guadalupe Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas

## CLASS 22 - CLASS 22 - CLASS 22

On Saturday, October 23rd Class 22 studied Rainwater Harvesting. Jim Johnson explained installation of a drip irrigation plan while Liz Romero answered questions including one about the effect of soil composition on water distribution.



Class 22 will graduate close to thirty students on December 1<sup>st</sup>. The graduation speaker will be Jayla Fry, an *AgriLife* Extension agent, a Master Gardener, and co-editor of the Texas Master Gardener Handbook. She will speak on both the EarthKind Program and the Texas Master Gardener Program. Travis Franke will preside over the graduation and we hope to certify several students as Texas Master Gardeners. Many members of Class 22 are already very involved in the Guadalupe Chapter's programs and enthusiastic about continuing to learn more about gardening in Guadalupe County.

## NEW OFFICERS ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION

George Ammermann, as President –Elect this year will be President in 2011. The following persons are your new Officers and Board. Bob Davis is President-Elect, Doug Biggs is Vice President, Bob Teweles is Treasurer, and Sandy Foss is Secretary.

TMGA Delegates elected for the new two year term are Gail Johnson and Jim Johnson, Alternate.

For the non-elected Board appointed positions, Peggy Jones volunteered for the Publications Committee and Linda Bruno volunteered for the Education Committee. We still need a volunteer for the Volunteer Committee. On other Standing Committees, Clara Mae Marcotte volunteered to chair the Speakers Bureau, Dale and Ann Odvody volunteered for the Hours Reporting Committee, and Dale Odvody and Beth Zies for the Notification Committee.



The Master Gardener Association is a **volunteer organization**.  
We need **YOU** to help with our projects.

## New Committees and Openings for the GCMG

Project Evaluation Committee – Reviews requests for GCMG assistance with projects. Thanks to Gillian Siemens, Barbara Gettig and Janice Knobles who have volunteered for this.

Membership Outreach Committee – Monitors meeting attendance and calls members who miss meetings. Merv Cook will be our good will ambassador.

Schertz Community Garden – Operating Committee. - Work to establish budget for 2011 along with fund raising activities and grant opportunities. Linda Bruno and Holly Bustamente can still use other volunteers to help.

Education Committee – Plan and coordinate educational opportunities for both members and the public for 2011. Romelia Escamilla has already agreed to assist but more volunteers are still needed.

Volunteer Committee – Make sure volunteers are available for projects, follow up with project coordinators to get reports on events and motivate members to volunteer. This is a very important part of the GCMG team and we are still looking for someone to take on this challenge.

If you are interested in any of these committees, please contact Linda, [jlbruno@gvec.net](mailto:jlbruno@gvec.net)

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And if you are reading this newsletter, then thank Elaine McIntyre for her patience with all of us as she sends out deadlines for articles needed, then reminds us again when we are late (I think I am the worst). She researches upcoming classes and other activities to keep this newsletter fresh and pertinent.. Then she takes all the stuff we send her and organizes it into a wonderful publication that does a great job of representing who and what we are.



The next time you see any of these people, take a minute to thank them and give them a big hug. Their efforts hold us all together and they need to know we appreciate them.

Linda Bruno

## 2011 Guadalupe County Fair Committee.

Peggy Love has agreed to Chair the 2011 County Fair Committee.  
Yeah!!!!

## MEMBER AT WORK

Guadalupe County Master Gardener Penny Glawe gives a talk on Citrus Greening to the Nogales Garden Club on November 16th



# Peterson Brother's Wholesale Nursery Tour Review

By Peggy Jones

Remember this item in our Guadalupe Gardener newsletter. ---

**Nov 12 - Peterson Brother's Wholesale Nursery Tour**, 1630 Creekview Dr, San Antonio -10 a.m. to noon. Come tour one of South Texas' largest wholesale growers of poinsettias, seasonal bedding plants, vegetables and a whole lot more. Wear good walking shoes. Bring cameras. Be on time

This tour was great fun. It was led by Dr Jerry Parsons (need I say more) and David Rodriguez, Bexar County *Agri*LIFE Extension Agent. First we were introduced to Mr. Peterson. He had a few words to say about how his father started the business and how Dr Parsons influenced what plants the wholesalers and nurseries grew and sold. For an incredible story about the Petersons and Dr Parsons go to the following website and read the history of that relationship. [http://plantanswers.com/parsons\\_30\\_years.htm](http://plantanswers.com/parsons_30_years.htm). The Peterson Brothers article is about two thirds of the way down the page.

Dr Parsons started the tour by showing us the test plants outside the main building. Several new types of double trailing petunias, new varieties of stock and a new really dark pink Queens Crown vine called Fandango are all being tested.



Peterson Brothers makes their own potting soil. It is sterilized and blended in these huge containers that look like they came off the back of cement trucks. Then it gets poured into the potting containers. To get seeds started they put the seeds into flats of sterile soil then cover them with a thin layer of kitty litter that helps hold in the moisture.

When ready, the seedlings are delicately pulled apart by hand and put in the flats one seedling at a time. Then the seedling flats go into the green houses where misters keep them wet. As the plants grow they are moved outside and placed in racks that are on rails. If the weather should turn bad the plants can easily be rolled back into the shelter of the green houses.



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The rows and rows of pansies were just beautiful. Dr Parsons said that the faceless pansies were the more fragrant ones. Then he took us into the poinsettia houses. Just breath taking seeing the amazingly beautiful colors.



**On a special note, he recommended adding 6 ice cubes each day to your poinsettias to keep them moist enough.**

On page 12 is an order form for the beautiful poinsettia's from Peterson Wholesale Nursery. Note that the orders must be prepaid by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> and picked up on Dec 10 (noon-3pm) or Dec 11 (9am-noon) at the Bexar County Master Gardener offices at 3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 208, San Antonio, Tx 78230.

The funds raised go to their Master Gardener Scholarships to benefit deserving students in Horticulture studies. Peggy Jones

### **Subscribe or Renew and Add to the GCMG Treasury**

To all of you **Texas Gardener** subscribers (or those of you thinking about subscribing), **Texas Gardener** has invited the GCMG to join their Fundraising Program. For each subscription that goes through us (and yes that includes renewals), the GCMG will be able to keep 25% in its treasury. Instead of sending your renewal notice and payment to **Texas Gardener**, make your check payable to GCMG and send it with your mailing address to 210 E. Live Oak, Seguin, Tx, 78155. Give us your phone number too in case we have any questions and mark the envelope **Texas Gardener** subscription. The GCMG will send the subscription on to the **Texas Gardener** for processing. Rates are as follows: 1 year - \$24.95; 2 year - \$42.95; 3 year - \$53.95. Add an extra \$8 on the one year renewal for the Annual Calendar. You don't have to be a Master Gardener to participate, so if you have friends that subscribe, tell them about the Fundraising Program. Any questions? Email [jlbruno@gvec.net](mailto:jlbruno@gvec.net)

# Bexar County Master Gardener Poinsettia Sale



## Floral Quality Center Piece Poinsettias for pick up on Dec 10 - 11

Grown by one of the largest growers in the area  
Sold by florists and leading nurseries from \$20 to \$30

### Four Colors: Red, White, Maroon, Bi-colored (pink & white)

(Above are 6 ½" pots with support rings; delivered with protective sleeves)

1-4 plants \$14 ea    5 or more at \$12 ea

Also, available for orders will be  
Smaller poinsettia in **Red** color **ONLY**

(4 1/2" pot) - \$5 ea — great gift idea!

Master Gardener Scholarships Benefit Deserving Students in Horticulture Studies

**Orders must be prepaid and placed by Dec 1**  
*Limited Quantities of some colors. ORDER EARLY*

### ORDER FORM

*All orders must be paid at time of order.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

1-4 plants \$14 ea - 5 or more \$12 ea, 6 ½" pot

Red \_\_\_\_\_ White \_\_\_\_\_ Maroon \_\_\_\_\_ Bi-colored (pink&white) \_\_\_\_\_

Pot covers for 6 ½" pot: gold \_\_\_\_\_ red \_\_\_\_\_ green \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$1 ea

Red (4 ½" pot) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$5 ea

Total cost \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: **Bexar County Master Gardeners**,  
3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 208, San Antonio, TX 78230

Pick-up at the BCMG office: Friday, Dec 10 (noon- 3 pm); Saturday, Dec 11 (9 am - noon)

## *The Wandering Gardener*

### **Joshua Tree NP, California**



Located in southeast California, south of Twenty-nine Palms, Joshua Tree NP covers 800,000 acres. It touches three deserts—the Mojave, Colorado and Sonoran. Growing in the park is an unusual tree, the Joshua tree. It can be found in several parts of the park at elevations above 4,000 feet. The trees can grow to be 40 ft tall and provide shade, water and housing for the animals that live in the park. Along with the Joshua tree one can find groves of Cholla cactus, smoke trees, ocotillo and other desert plantlife. The blooming period begins in late February with the Joshua tree sending out multiple white creamy stalks and then continues thru June as the park

awakens with spring and summer flowers and other blooming cacti in late March and April. The ocotillo will bloom with red flower spikes after each rainfall, spring thru fall.

This area is crisscrossed by more than 100 faults. Because of that there are many examples of the effects of earthquakes on the earth. There are huge granite monoliths which are available for climbing as well as viewing, canyons and rock formations that one cannot believe just happened on their own. There is one mountain overlook where you can see the San Dreus fault and, on a clear day, you can see all the way to the Salton Sea which lies south of the park. The park offers camping and day use with quite a few picnic tables, many hiking trails and rock climbing areas and very good paved roads. Close by are General Patton's museum, Palm Springs and Salton Sea (a desert lake that is 235 ft below sea level and 25 percent saltier than the ocean).



Marilyn Moltz is The Wandering Gardener

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## San Antonio Stock Show an Rodeo

The construction phase of the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo will start Monday morning, Jan. 17, 2011. Getting there about 8:30 a.m., will let you miss most of the morning traffic on I10. We usually quit around 3:00 p.m. to beat the traffic heading out of town. Best way to get there is find your favorite way to I10 West and get off on the Commerce and Houston exit (579) and head to the AT&T Center. If you have never been there before, when you take the 579 exit, move to the far right turn only lane immediately and go down the hill to the light. If the light is green, make the right hand turn to the AT&T Center. If the light is red, stop and make sure traffic is clear before turning right. In fact, if the light is green, make sure some @\$#!\*% idiot isn't running a red light before making a right turn. You'll go through another traffic light, again stopping if it is red, and go past the AT&T Center and the front of Joe and Harry Freeman coliseum. Just before the railroad tracks, on the right, you'll see Entrance A to the parking on the right side of the road. Turn there and go to the gate. If there is a guard there, tell them you are going to the Texas Experiences building to work with the Bexar County Master Gardeners and County Extension agents, if they stop you. After going through the gates, there will be a gate on the right, go through it and the Texas Experiences building is the white metal building on the far right. Park anywhere that doesn't block the doors. There will be a sign-in sheet inside. If you want to come earlier, I am usually there by 7:30 to beat the traffic that goes 70 - 80 mph past my house in the morning.

We use all kinds of tools, power drills, hammers, screwdrivers, and the like, as well as, rakes, shovels, trowels, wheel barrows, etc. Gloves and knee pads may make your life more comfortable. Layered clothing is a must in cold weather. As it gets warmer during the day, you can stay comfortable. **You don't need to call me to sign-up, just show up.** We have never had too many workers. Too many bosses, yes, as can be expected with any project. Don't do anything you are not comfortable doing. We want no one to hurt themselves. I, for one, will not climb up a 20 foot extension ladder, even though I'm the one who brings it. It folds into a nice and safe 10 foot ladder I only have to climb eight feet up on. And you don't have to be skilled with tools to participate. We need helpers, gofers, and grunt laborers too. My first year, I was all three. This year (2010), my third, I was one of the construction team chiefs. It wasn't that I knew more than the others, I just had more tools than many of the others. So come and show us what you want and can do and we'll let you do it. Electricity is available to recharge your battery powered tools, if you bring your charger and extension cords for the others. Don't laugh or feel insulted, just this year a volunteer brought this case full of battery powered tools with dead batteries and no charger and it was a brand no one else's charger fit. And yes, put your name on all your tools and equipment. It makes them a lot easier to find and return. For example, at any one time there might be four or five Ryobi power drivers on the floor and two of them will be mine. They all look the same without a name.

Indoor plumbing is available if you need it, and we usually do sometime during a seven-hour work day if we hydrate ourselves properly. Last year they even put doors on the stalls.

Cold water is provided. Sometimes sodas are available for lunch, which is also provided by the lunch committee volunteers. So, if you are a soda fanatic or only like one flavor, please feel free to bring your own. If you are on a restricted diet, a refrigerator is usually available. I say usually because if I said always, Murphy's Law would immediately take effect and the fridge would breakdown.

We all help one another and have a good time. The person in charge of one project easily becomes a gofer for another project, so check your egos at the door. Where else can you earn gardening volunteer hours indoors and get a free lunch to boot?

Dale Odvody

## SEED CLEANING PARTIES AT THE WILDFLOWER CENTER

Remember October's speaker Minnette Marr from the LBJ Wildflower Center? She talked about the Seeds of Success, the seed collection program. Well, the schedule for cleaning the seeds begins Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> where there will be seed cleaning, gossiping about a variety of subjects, pizza eating, gossiping about a variety of subjects and seed cleaning - from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. If you are interested, mark it on your calendar. Further notices and dates will be in this newsletter and also sent out by email blast. Car pooling may be arranged, or email [jbruno@gvec.net](mailto:jbruno@gvec.net)

## More Volunteer Opportunities

Monday, from 9 to noon, except for federal holidays, the Master Gardener office is open at the Extension Building on 210 East Live Oak. Remember that Betty needs you to package seeds for our activities. Email Betty Hughes, [ehughes5@satx.rr.com](mailto:ehughes5@satx.rr.com) for more information.

Volunteers for the Tor Drive project should contact Buddy Nagel, [cliftonnagel@yahoo.com](mailto:cliftonnagel@yahoo.com), Jeff McKee, [jmac@satx.rr.com](mailto:jmac@satx.rr.com), or Jim Johnson, [gailpjohnson@earthlink.net](mailto:gailpjohnson@earthlink.net) for times and information.

Gloria Saenz has volunteered to keep our MG scrapbook. If anyone has articles or photos about MGs or MG events, please send them to Gloria, [saenz2252@sbcglobal.net](mailto:saenz2252@sbcglobal.net)

Speakers' Bureau: please contact Clara Mae Marcotte at [rcm.marcotte@gmail.com](mailto:rcm.marcotte@gmail.com) if you speak to a group so that we will have that for our files. If anyone hears of a group needing a speaker, have them contact Clara Mae who can find a speaker to speak on their requested topic.

We need volunteers before the SA Stock Show & Rodeo opens on Feb. 3rd.- starting on Jan. 12th. Contact Dale Odvody at [odvodyd@swbell.net](mailto:odvodyd@swbell.net)

## Internet Classes

Earthkind classes are available at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/training/>

Agrilife is now charging \$10 to take the Tomato 101 class found at <https://agrilifevents.tamu.edu/events/details.cfm?id=641> but it is well worth it.

You may not take over 3 credits a calendar year.

# GARDENING EVENTS

## TMGA Annual Conference, Glen Rose Texas April 27-29, 2011

2011 TMGA Conference REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!! Visit the website <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?TexasMasterGardenerA/120fbc803c/31b0f7b797/f0287a62aa> for information on education sessions, tours, and workshops. Register early to get the best choice of education sessions, tours and workshops!

## The Mosaic Labyrinth at Mosaic Community Church

by Jim Taylor

There has been a lot of interest in this "round rock thing" that sits in the middle of our community garden here at Mosaic. Usually, I get the question formed with at least one eye-brow raised and a tilt of the head that suggests they are ready for something strange for an answer. However, those unfamiliar with Labyrinths, do seem disconcerted when I respond without hesitation: "It's an alien-landing pad--we know they're out there, it's just a matter of time." The nervous laughter that follows probably gives insight to the need for more religious education on the church's part.

We *are* an inclusive church; so Aliens *are* welcome, but this is not their welcome pad! Instead, our labyrinth is a prayer path for contemplation and centering, forming the very center of our Community Garden.

Specifically, we built an 11-circuit, Chartres (pronounced, "shahr-truh") labyrinth. There are 12 concentric circles in the labyrinth, enclosing 11 paths, or circuits. The center, then, is the 12th circle. Our labyrinth is 78 feet in diameter.

The Chartres labyrinth is a distinctly Christian pattern, named after the permanent stone labyrinth set into the floor of the Chartres Cathedral in France during the thirteenth century. The great tradition of labyrinths in medieval Christianity was their use as a symbol for pilgrimages. When actual trips to Jerusalem became too dangerous and expensive for European pilgrims, massive cathedrals were designated as pilgrimage shrines. Within those cathedrals, the labyrinth pattern was embedded in the stone floors of the nave--this became the final steps of the pilgrim's journey.

The labyrinth is one of the oldest contemplative and transformational tools known to humankind. They have been used for centuries for prayer, ritual, initiation and personal and spiritual growth. Today, labyrinths are often used in spiritual retreats, as well as, hospitals and rehabilitation centers. Walking the labyrinth just naturally causes our attention to start turning inward, focusing in the present moment. Labyrinths can be used as a spiritual practice, to relieve stress, or help persons work through grief and illness. At the most basic level, walking the labyrinth focuses the attention, stills the mind, and quiets the breathing.

# December 2010



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 KWED Radio 1580 AM Lawn & Garden Show 9:05 a.m..  ● <b>New Moon</b>
5	6 Master Gardener Office/Library Open 8:30-NOON	7	8	9	10 <b>GCMG Christmas Social 6 p.m.</b>	11 KWED Radio 1580 AM Lawn & Garden Show 9:05 a.m.
12	13 Master Gardener Office/Library Open 8:30-NOON	14	15	16	17	18 KWED Radio 1580 AM Lawn & Garden Show 9:05 a.m.
19  ● <b>Full Moon</b>	20 Master Gardener Office/Library Open 8:30-NOON	21	22	23	24 	25 KWED Radio 1580 AM Lawn & Garden Show 9:05 a.m.
26	27 Master Gardener Office/Library Open 8:30-NOON	28	29	30	31 	



**Guadalupe County Master Gardeners, Inc.**  
**210 East Live Oak St.**  
**Seguin, TX 78155**

**Guadalupe County Master Gardeners** <http://www.guadalupecountymastergardeners.org>  
**830-379-1972 Ext 210**

**Guadalupe County AgriLIFE Extension** <http://www.guadalupe-tx.tamu.edu/> **830-379-1972**  
**Texas Master Gardeners** <http://www.txmg.org>

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### **December Social** **Friday, December 10, 2010**

**Time – 6 PM**

*AgriLife Extension Building*  
*210 E. Live Oak, Seguin, Tx*

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