



Horti-Bull

HORTICULTURAL BULLETIN

Published Monthly by the SAN ANTONIO MEN'S GARDEN CLUB
A club for Men and WOMEN interested in all aspects of gardening

WEBSITE: mensgardenclubofsa.org

Volume 2025

November

Number 11



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Alberto Del Rio

The past month of October was enjoyable, with more moderate temperatures and some welcome rain. It was also a month with a spectacular number of events! We began the month with the Herb Festival at Rainbow Gardens with a very busy Children's Garden presentation on 11 October. Shortly thereafter, we again hosted a very special plant sale and Children's Garden at the 10th annual Monarch and Pollinator's Festival at Brackenridge Park. The crowds were HUGE and our hard-to-find plants sold quickly. So many youngsters visited the Children's Garden that we ran out of plants for the kids. A special thank you to all who donated plants for the kids to pot up. And finally, to cap off the month, we hosted an MGCSA information booth at the San Antonio Garden Center for the South-Central Regional Rose Show and Convention, on 25 October. The attendees at all of these events were fascinated by our widely admired MGC Horti-Bull and we passed out almost 100 printed copies, and many membership applications. Many people expressed interest in the MGCSA, and hopefully some of those folks may attend our November Tamalada.

Our annual Tamalada honors Malcolm Beck, a long-time member and early and strong supporter of the MGCSA who is famous as the Father of Organic Gardening in Central Texas, and the author of a number of beautifully written gardening books. We're looking forward to welcoming everyone to our Tamalada.

This month we'll also nominate, and vote for, our new Club officers for 2026, and give everyone an opportunity to sign up for our marvelous annual Christmas Party held at the Oblate site.

My special thanks go to all of our MGC volunteers who made our October events a resounding success and a warm welcome to all of our guests and prospective new members we met at these events.

Looking forward to seeing you at our November/ Tamalada – it's always an event to remember!

Alberto Del Rio



MGCSA MONTHLY MEETING
November 6, 2025 at the
SAN ANTONIO GARDEN CENTER
At the corner of Funston Place
and North New Braunfels
Annual Malcolm Beck Tamalada
And Election of 2026 Officers

At the November meeting there will be good eating, items for discussion, and election of 2026 officers; as well as our educational program. SEE PAGE 8 FOR DETAILS.

The annual Installation of Officers
and Christmas Party

FRIDAY December 5th, 6pm to 9:30pm
at the Oblate St Eugene Hall
See page 8 for more details

Election of 2026 officers. Our candidates are:

President: Alberto Del Rio

1st Vice President: Charles Bartlett

2nd Vice President: Vallerie Hartfield

3rd Vice President: John Sells

Treasurer: Paul Huegel

Secretary: Jeff Brown

Board of Directors 2026-28: Sylvia Tamez

Isaac Martinez

During the election process, feel free to volunteer yourself, and to nominate other candidates.



Horti-Bull Gardening Calendar for November 2025 From Dr. Calvin Finch

It is early in the month, that means we are still in the midst of the transition from the summer garden conditions to the winter garden conditions. You probably have both snapdragons and zinnias in the cut flower garden and tomatoes and broccoli in the vegetable garden. By the end of the month, however, the cold weather should arrive, and it will clearly become winter garden time.

You have a number of snapdragons to choose from. My favorites are the "Rockets". They grow to over 3 feet tall with heavy clumps of blooms of red, pink, yellow, violet, and white flowers that are showy but notorious for falling over in the wind and rain. The "Sonnets" offer the same colors but only grow to 18 inches tall and offer disciplined blooms for cut flowers and row plants. Several even shorter selections do very well in small containers or rows in full sun.

Stocks also make wonderful bedding plants and cut flowers with even more color options than snapdragons plus a powerful fragrance. The violet versions are especially showy. They are available in plants that grow to 14 inches or less.

For a winter flower that grows in a mound, select calendula. They warm up the winter garden over a long season with their golden and yellow blooms that resemble small mums.

The most cold tolerant winter annuals are pansies and their cousins the violas. There are two main bloom patterns of pansies including clear face and black centers surrounded by every color you can imagine including blues and violets. The blooms vary from half dollar to silver dollar size. Use pansies in containers and colorful beds. The violas have more of a mounding shape with small colorful flowers that are very decorative in small or large containers.

For the shade grow cyclamen and primula. Both species feature intensely colored blooms and waxy patterned leaves. Protect the primula from slugs and snails with a bait. You will be shocked by the price of the individual plants unless you get a chance to admire the blooms and leaves before you see the prices.

In the vegetable garden your tomatoes, peppers, okra, and other remnant hot weather veggies should keep producing until the end of the month when the cold weather usually arrives. Also expect some of the winter veggies to produce crops. Radishes, sugar peas, carrots, beets and turnips, plus the broccoli and greens such as Swiss chard and kale should be producing.

Plant spinach early in the month and onions later in the month. Have plenty of Bt products such as BioWorm Killer and Thuricide to protect the cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and other greens from the cabbage loopers.

The lawn can still be fertilized with a "winterizer" formula such as 18-06-12 early in the month, but do not wait until the grass has quit growing.

It is also essential to be ready for freezing weather. Move bougainvillea, oriental hibiscus, Porter weed and other cold sensitive plants into shelter early in the month. Have fabric ready to cover citrus, cyclamen and other cold sensitive plants, plus back it up with a heat source such as non-LED mechanics' lights. Better yet, grow the cold sensitive citrus such as lemons and limes in containers that you can transport into a greenhouse or other protected area.

Continued Column 2

MGCSA Officers for 2025

President	Alberto Del Rio	210-518-5097
1st V.P.	John Opiela	210-532-5963
2nd V.P.	Vallerie Hartfield	210-240-1466
3rd V.P.	Vacant	
Treasurer	Paul Huegel	210-385-9072
Secretary	Jeff Brown	210-387-5092
Chaplain	Vallerie Hartfield	210-240-1466

Directors

2023-2025

Barbara Lamm	210-648-8001
Leonard Martinez	210-514-0584

2024-2026

David Badorski	815-436-3970
Ken Wolfgram	210-788-0177

2025-2027

Gary Ross	210-836-4952
Andrew Waring	210-307-9704

Other

EX Officio	Elena Schriener	210-218-4155
HB Advertising	Paul Huegel	
Historian	Paul Huegel	
Webmaster	Ivan Roman	
HB Editor	Larry Cromer	210-521-5350



Alberto shows off his new hat, and the pollinator plants that he and Charles grew for the Monarch Fest

Calvin Finch Continued

Despite the threat of cold weather November is a good time to plant shade trees. Some of the recommended selections to consider are live oak, Texas red oak, Chinkapin oak, cedar elm, bur oak, Mexican white oak, anaqua, Mexican sycamore, and Montezuma cypress. The key is to keep them well watered and do not plant them any deeper than they were growing in their container. Plant new trees 30 feet away from the house and other structures.

35th Annual Herb Market at Rainbow Garden Nursery

By Paul Huegel

The Herb Market was a success again this year on October 11, 2025. This was our eighth year as an invitee to showcase our Mobile Children's Garden and promote membership in the Club. The event was scheduled to take place from 9AM to 2PM but we needed to set up and tear down which extended our day from 8AM to 3PM. Another advantage of our new venue at the Rainbow Garden Nursery was that we could set up on Friday for the Saturday event, and there was plenty of free parking,

On a beautiful day there was a constant flow of people at our spacious location next to a gazebo we could use shaded by a beautiful large oak tree. This prime location drew more children than usual for our Children's Garden from previous years. Our primary goal was to operate the Children's Garden and promote membership to the club. The volunteers that participated helped with the Children's Garden while projecting a positive image of the Club by answering many plant related questions from the children's parents and grandparents. It was a real group effort and everyone seemed ready, willing and able to volunteer. We had enough volunteers but I was disappointed that more Club members missed a golden opportunity to enjoy the event and promote membership at this popular attraction.

Thanks again to Alberto Del Rio and Charles Bartlett for logistical support and expert plant advice. They unselfishly took time away from their landscape business to haul the equipment and materials to and from the Oblate greenhouse as well as setting up and tearing down our exhibit. Also, thanks to Mark Weigand, John Sells, Ed Elbel, David Badorski, Larry Cromer, Adrienne Hacker, Isaac Martinez (our newest member), and yours truly for assisting in setting up, running and tearing down our exhibits. For a charitable event, we had a good turnout of volunteers and children wanting to plant. All in all, it turned out to be a fun and worthwhile endeavor. Hopefully we will get invited again next year with even more Club volunteers and spectators, and again at the beautiful Rainbow Gardens Nursery.



Charles Bartlett and John Sells discuss Herbs and the club with a visitor



Mark Weigand guides a young gardener in her Herb planting



A family affair



Time to go home. Everyone pitches in to load.



THE HERB GANG.

1st Row: Alberto Del Rio, Adrienne Hacker
2nd: John Sells, Paul Huegel 3rd: Mark Weigand, Charles Bertlett, Jeff Brown. Missing from Picture: Mike Elbel, David Badorski, & Isaac Martinez

**SPRING
HOURS**

**Tuesday -
Sunday
9:30-6:00**



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Future gardeners and dads love to do plant artwork

AN ANCIENT PLANT – A NEW TREASURE

Firecracker Plant (Bouvardia ternifolia)

By Charles Bartlett

Scarlet Bouvardia, Scarlet Hummingbird Flower, Firecracker Bush --- lots of names for the same plant. Non-stop flowers on this little-known Southwestern native plant attracts hummingbirds and a wide variety of other beautiful pollinators. Bouvardia ternifolia is a native throughout the northern Mexican highlands and into West and South Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona where it grows in gravel, rocky, dry soils in mountainous areas and canyons.

In today's competitive plant world, I think all of us are always on the lookout for the next undiscovered gem that no one else seems to have. An outstanding, but little known dry land native plant that fits the bill is certainly the Firecracker Bush.

Upon first glance, one's attention is immediately drawn to the bright, scarlet, red-orange tubular flowers that entirely blanket the plant. Flowering from early April until the first hard frost, Firecracker Bush will put on a non-stop floral display with its continuous and profuse bloom. Flowers form at the end of each branch in clusters and can number more than 25 per head. Flared at the end and tubular in shape, each flower is approximately 2 inches long. Think of it as the most outstanding nectar source!

With an overall mounding habit reaching 3 feet tall by 3 feet wide, it can become a bit leggy if given too much irrigation and fertilizer, but if cut back, new flowers and foliage will quickly reemerge. Once established, B. ternifolia is drought-tolerant and will continue to flower profusely even with minimal water. Expert gardeners recommend raised beds and crevice gardens as a perfect site for this sun loving plant.

Few, if any, pest and disease issues affect the plant, making it carefree in terms of maintenance. Being able to withstand heat and humidity makes this an easy choice for many regions of the country. The plant has also proven itself to grow in a wide range of soils from nutritionally poor ones (alkaline gravel) to clay. While the plant prefers to be located in full sun, it will also thrive in part to light shade. It is resistant to deer and rabbit damage.



For those wishing to attract a wider variety of pollinators into the garden, B. ternifolia is a must. Placing the plant near an easily viewed area is sure to be rewarding, as hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies will be quick to hone in on the long, tubular, nectar-rich, red flowers. Uses for Firecracker Bush are as endless as one's imagination. It combines well with other plants in mixed containers and hanging baskets. In the garden it makes both a stunning specimen plant as well as an excellent plant for a mass planting that will command one's attention from a distance. And, as a cut flower, the blooms will last up to a week or more. Firecracker Bush is a root hardy perennial and remains evergreen in the winter in sheltered locations. It's recommended for USDA climate zones 7b to 10.

At our recent Monarch and Pollinator Festival plant sale, the Men's Garden Club offered a number of these plants for sale. They sold out in record time! Check your local native plant nursery (Rainbow Gardens, too) for this treasure. It'll be a welcome addition to your garden.

Ronnie Grell
Managing Partner

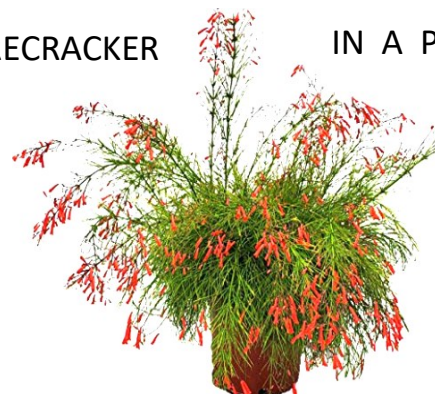
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FIRECRACKER IN A POT



November 2025

**** Review of OUR OCTOBER PROGRAM ****

Our popular "Show and Tell" took the place of a speaker this month. Charles Bartlett spoke about the Dakota Gold Bitterweed (*Helenium amarum*), a Texas superstar native. Of note, its bitter tasting foliage makes it unpopular with deer and cattle, so wildlife won't eat it. It virtually requires no maintenance and is very drought resistant. Charles also spoke about the changsha tangerine which was used to develop the arctic frost. It's a tasty tangerine although it is very seedy. It's good outdoors to about nine degrees Fahrenheit. In extreme cold, the changsha should be moved inside. Alberto Del Rio brought a cutting of an old-fashioned lantana which is also very drought tolerant. He also shared information about the Mexican Honeysuckle, which is deer proof, can be planted in sunny or partly shaded areas and flowers all year round. In addition, he spoke about purple beauty berry Americana and Mexican beauty berry, a native plant. Joe Shinnars had an impressive array of leaf rakes. There are many needs in a garden and Joe demonstrated the best rakes to handle each of these jobs. Some rakes he adapted to fit the job in the garden. Paul Huegel added his garden anecdotes including his garden spider, Charlotte. Ed Elbel told us of his various successes with grapevine cuttings which he got from MGC member Manual Flores.

From Mary Martinez



On October 2, a little drama was unfolding outside our meeting at the Garden Center. It seems that a nest of honeybees had fallen from one of the trees. In her Entomologist Suit and with a bee smoker in hand, Wendy Leonard from the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department was patiently collecting the bees to move them to a safe location (For the bees and for us!) Wendy said she had trained under Molly Keck, our guest speaker at the September meeting - "15 bugs every gardener should know". Was the honeybee one of them?

From Mary Martinez



The traditional Tamalada is when a group of people (a party of people) get together to make the Christmas Tamales. A Garden Club Tamalada is when the club members get together and consumes a large amount of tamales, and other things. *From Larry Cromer*

November 2025



TENTH ANNUAL MONARCH BUTTERFLY AND POLLINATOR FESTIVAL

by Paul D Huegel

The Tenth Annual Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Festival took place at the beautiful Brackenridge Park on October 18, 2025. This was our fourth year in attendance and like last year it was a fun and memorable event.

On a picture perfect day the festival itself was very successful with more children and families than I have ever seen at any event we participated in. Like last year the MGCSA had two exhibits. Charles Bartlett and Al Del Rio managed the pollinator plant sales with volunteer help from John Sells and I managed the Children's Garden with some assistance from Isabel Roman, Ida Santiago Maldonado, Keith Massa, Sylvia Tamez, Richard Vasquez, Isac Martinez, Larry Cromer, and Mary Martinez. We had the same picturesque spot as last year with more than 200 kids and their families keeping us constantly on the go. Our assigned site was situated in a picturesque area with many tall beautiful trees and an aqueduct behind our setup. Music speakers were set up close by and a roaming Dixieland jazz band entertained us throughout the day.

Charles Bartlett and Al Del Rio brought many unique pollinator plants to sell. The event organizers were giving away free trees and other butterfly attractors like tropical milkweed. Charles and Al sold most of the special plants they brought and donated the proceeds to the club which amounted to more than \$1,400. The club is blessed to have members like Charles and Al who not only give their time and talent but generously support us with many sizable donations. As stated earlier, the Children's Garden educated 200 plus children on the basics of gardening with Purple Heart and Spider plant cuttings donated by Ken Wolfgram and myself. The Children's Garden gave away all of the plants donated.

As usual, we made do with a small group of volunteers but could have used more because of the constant flow of people, especially at the Children's Garden section. , Alberto Del Rio, Charles Bartlett and myself managed all the logistics. The only disappointment beside the lack of volunteers was that more members did not take advantage of this fun event on a picture perfect day. If invited again next year to the Eleventh Butterfly and Pollinator Festival, count me in and hopefully I will be joined with more club members who will participate and enjoy all the festivities as I always do.



Lft to Rt: 1: 2 future gardeners show their plantings to their Mom and the camera as Sylvia Tamez and Mary Martinez observe from the rear. 2: Paul Huegel is surrounded by 2 Wannbe Monarchs, Isabel Roman and Ida Santiago, as 2 future gardeners fill their plant containers. 3: The plant art table is busy as usual by an appreciative future gardener.



THE NECTAR BAR - NATIVE PLANT NURSERY
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MEMBERSHIP

Attendance: October 2, 2025 34

Members, 1 Guests.

Happy Birthday to all November births.

Healing and recovery to all who are sick.

Strength, comfort, peace, and love to all who are coping with losses.

November 2025



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Paradise Nursery, L.L.C.

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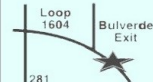
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2026 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

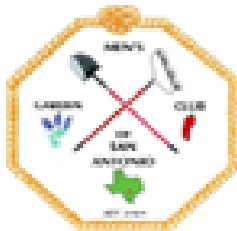
Below is your membership application for 2026. You can copy it, fill it out, and mail it in. We will have forms available at the next meetings for your convenience. If you cannot copy it, put all the info needed on paper and mail that in with your check. In all cases, PLEASE write legibly.

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Men's Garden Club of San Antonio (MGCSA)

Open to men and women **2026 Membership Application**



Annual Membership	3-year Membership	Life Membership
\$20 Individual	\$50 Individual	\$200 Individual
\$25 Joint*	\$60 Joint*	\$250 Joint*

*Joint membership is one additional member residing in the same household. Both members may enjoy all the member benefits of the MGCSA, but only one receives the club newsletter, the Horti-Bull.

Please circle above the type of membership. Use one form for each membership or joint membership. Please print or write legibly.

Name _____ Spouse _____

Street Address _____

City _____ TX 78 _____ Occupation _____

Phone Number _____ E-Mail _____

Best way and time to connect _____

Today's Date _____ New Member

Sponsor _____ Renewal

CK # _____

Cash _____

Make checks payable to MGCSA; Address:

Paul Huegel, 15619 Cloud Top, SA, TX 78248

Come and join us at 6PM for the 2025 Malcolm Beck Tamalada

The November 6, 2025, meeting will be held at the San Antonio Garden Center with a full program. The meeting starts at 6PM, an hour earlier than our normal start time. We celebrate our annual Malcolm Beck Tamalada with an informal dinner of delicious tamales and other side dishes of your choosing. You are encouraged to join us and enjoy the fellowship with other members of the club. The **tamales, beans, and beverages will be furnished by the club.** Members are invited to bring their favorite side dishes to enhance the main course, TAMALES!

At 7 pm, the formal meeting will commence with a short business session, discussion of the December Officer Installation and Christmas Party, **and conduct the election of officers for 2026.** We have already identified a slate of potential officers, and the floor will be open to add to this list. After the election of officers, we will have an open house for show and tell. Anyone and everyone with a horticultural product to show and explain to the audience or a story to tell is invited to be a presenter. It will be a good time to share any of your horticultural ideas, experiments, and experiences and a chance to show off your gardening handiwork.



Remember, the club furnishes the tamales, beans, and beverages, and members furnish the rest.

Installation of Officers and Christmas Dinner Party

The Installation of Officers and Christmas Dinner will be held again this year at 5700 Blanco Rd, The Oblate Grotto, in the St Eugene Hall. Your host for the evening, President Alberto Del Rio will get the event rolling at 6:00PM, starting with the appetizers, and followed by dinner and program. Like all programs with varying activities, we may have to shift the schedule a few minutes, but we plan to start at 6PM and go home by 930PM.

Our caterer will furnish a beef and chicken entrée and 3 side dishes. Attendees are asked to bring their favorite seasonal appetizer and/or dessert to complement the evening meal.

Our host gets the program going by introducing longtime club member and past Club President, Mr. Joe Shiners, who will install our 2026 officers and add a few words to the program.

Our seasonal entertainment follows and hopefully will do just that, entertain you.

We have set the price this year at \$20.00 per person. As we all know, the cost of everything has gone up, and that includes the price of entertainment. The club will provide all traditional dinner beverages and our customary wine table.

You can mail in the application below . If you can't copy it, just put all the info asked for on paper and mail it with check to Vallerie as shown. We will have event applications at the November meeting for your convenience.

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Welcome to The Installation of Officers for 2026 & Christmas Dinner The Men's Garden Club of San Antonio

Mail checks to 'Vallerie Hartfield, 2410 Monticello Court, San Antonio, Tx 78223
\$20.00 Each

1. MEMBER

Full Name: _____ Phone # _____

2. Spouse/Guest

Full Name: _____ Phone #. _____

Payable to MGCSA, Total Amount Rendered & Check #: _____