



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](http://www.mensgardenclubofsa.org)

Volume 2025

May

Number 05



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Alberto Del Rio

It appears that Summer has arrived with a vengeance, and sustained 90-degree weather is right around the corner. It's time to check our newly planted vegetation daily to make sure the plants are not too dry. Even our well established perennials may soon need some special care, if we continue to see little or no rain. Let's mulch

to help retain moisture in the ground. I save bags of leaves, and if they are too coarse, I go over the leaves with my lawnmower, so the leaves can compost faster.

In April we have had TWO big plant sales. The close proximity of 2 sales in one month has been stressful, but Paul Huegel led a group of our tireless, ever faithful volunteers who were all extremely important in making the sales a resounding success. I want to express my special thanks to all the volunteers that so ably helped out at the Hollywood Park plant sale. Job well done! Thanks to you all. The Festival of Flowers is coming up on 31 May. Please bring plants for sale, and to trade at the event.

Special thanks go also to Suzy Crowley, and her expert staff at Casa Verde Farms, Inc. Suzy and her staff were able to answer many questions regarding the wholesale growing and propagation of plants, at our April MGC meeting. It was interesting to get a wholesale grower perspective on the horticultural industry. Our sincerest thanks for this informative presentation.....and the plant giveaway!

We're looking forward to our annual MGC picnic at MacArthur Park on Saturday, 24 May. It's has always been an exciting event and a chance to relax, and get to know our members even better on a sunny afternoon. Please mark your calendar, and plan to attend this fun event.

VIVA FIESTA! Alberto Del Rio

May 1, 2025 Meeting
Will be at the
SAN ANTONIO GARDEN CENTER
adjacent to the
San Antonio Botanical Gardens
at the corner of
N. New Braunfels and Funston Place
6:30 pm For Fellowship
Meeting begins at 7pm

Our Speaker will be Donald Gerber,
owner of Pollinatives Native Plant
Nursery. See page 5.

MGCSA COMING EVENTS

24 May— Men's Garden Club picnic at MacArthur Park. See page 3.

31 May –Festival of Flowers at the Shrine Auditorium. See page 4.

Summer Vacation: The 24 May picnic marks the beginning of our Summer Break. Our next scheduled meeting after the picnic is August 7, 2025.

Don't forget your items for the picnic AUCTION

Refreshments for April

A thru L

ITS YOUR TURN A thru Ls. We encourage you to stay after the meeting to help clean and straighten up so everyone can leave as soon as possible.



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

It is a good time to plant the hot weather vegetables such as pepper transplants, okra seeds, eggplant transplants, green bean seeds, cucumbers, and southern pea seeds in the garden.

If you planted one of the recommended determinate or semi-determinate tomatoes they should be prospering and set fruit by now. Give them another side dressing of a fertilizer like 19-05-09 slow-release lawn fertilizer if they are planted in a garden. In a container continue with a weekly dose of Miracle-Gro or give them one more dose of Osmocote. It is late to plant new tomato plants unless your nursery offers transplants in number one or larger containers. We will harvest our current crop of tomatoes in June and replant in July for the fall crop.

The snapdragons are still blooming but they will decline in May. Plant zinnias in the sun for cut flowers and nectar for the pollinators. They are available in bloom as transplants, usually the Profusion and the Dreamland selections, or in many seed varieties. My favorite seeded selections are the California and Cactus selections. The seeds will usually come up in a week.

Vincas are also available as transplants, seek out the Cora variety for great colors and resistance to aerial phytophthora. The deer do not eat the vincas. For small containers moss roses and purslane work well but they have a relatively short bloom period every day.

In the shade wax leaf or "Whopper" begonias are an excellent choice. They are available in 3 leaf colors and 3 bloom colors. They look drought sensitive, but they are not. The "Whoppers" are especially decorative.

Pentas are another good choice for shade. They do their best with a blast of morning or afternoon sun (for up to 3 hours) and are another favorite nectar source for hummingbirds and butterflies. Their flowers are available in red, pink, white, and violet. Use coleus or caladium for decorative foliage in the shade.

May is a good time to plant the hot weather perennials such as firebush, shrimp plant, Turk's cap, esperanza, and poinciana. There hasn't been much evidence of Monarch Butterfly migrants in April and the remnants will be proceeding out of our area into the north. But if you have zinnias, pentas, mistflower, Porter weed, blue curl, salvias, lantanas, sunflowers, and other nectar plants you will see lots of other butterflies including Queens, Black Swallowtails, Gulf Fritillaries, and Giant Swallowtails, Tiger Swallowtails, Red Admirals, Sulfurs, and Whites.

Early May is usually the best time to fertilize the lawn after you have mowed real grass twice. Avoid combination herbicide/fertilizer mixes, the timing is not right for our area. Too late for the weeds. Consider a lawn fertilizer such as 19-05-09. It is 50% slow-release nitrogen.

MEMBERSHIP *From Vallerie Hartfield*

- Attendance: April 3, 2025: 42 Members, 8 Guests.
- To pay your dues or get information on your membership status, please contact Paul Huegel, our Treasurer.
- Happy Birthday to all who were born in May.
- Healing and recovery to all who are sick.
- Strength, comfort, peace, and love to all who are coping with losses.

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 Wolfram		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

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are needed to support events and activities. Help is needed to set up and break down, sell, give information, sign up members, teach children how to plant and maintain a garden.

Please contact Vallerie Hartfield at 210-240-1466.

Thanks to all who volunteered for the Hollywood Park Plant sale on 3, 4, & 5 April.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS FOR:

- Garden Club's annual summer picnic, Saturday May 24, 2025— 12:30pm to 5pm. Need help to set up the tables and food line.
- Festival of Flowers-Saturday May 31, 2025, 9am to 5pm
- Oblate Project-Fountain Garden clean up-and rehab
- Children's Vegetable Garden

May 2025



**Always
Welcomed**

THE MGCSA 47TH ANNUAL PICNIC, SATURDAY MAY 24

It is time for the Garden Club's 47th annual picnic at Bexar County's MacArthur Park, located on the access road at **1611 NE Interstate Loop 410**.

It will be on **Saturday, May 24th**. We will be there from about 12:30pm until we get tired at 5pm. There will be liquid refreshments furnished by the club to include soda water, water, tea, and beer.

We will attempt to eat at 1:30pm and have the highly anticipated AUCTION after a reasonable time to enjoy the food. Before, after, and between those 2 functions we will have plants for sale, **award the door prizes** and Participate in other things that comes up.

The **annual auction** is a time when you can get rid of valuable items that you don't want or need anymore, and help the Club make a few dollars. So look in your garage, backyard, or closet for anything to sell - especially if you no longer have a need for it. And **bring money**, you may want to buy the gizmo that 'they' did not want.

As in the past, the garden club will be supplying the meats and attendees will be bringing the side dishes.

Vallerie Hartfield will be collecting the money. It will be \$10.00 as in the past. Her address is 2410 Monticello, SA, Tx 78223. If you have to mail in, use the form supplied. If you can't copy the form, just send all the info requested and the check to Valerie. Please get your money to her as soon as possible so we can have a good head count. You will be able to sign up and pay at the May 1st garden club meeting.

Barbara Lamm will be coordinating the side dishes. Call her and let her know what you are going to bring. That way we will not all bring the same thing. Her phone number is 210 648-8001.

As mentioned above, we will have **DOOR PRIZES** and **PLANTS FOR SALE**, See you all at the meeting on May 1st and picnic on May 24th.

MGCSA 47Th ANNUAL PICNIC 2025

DATE: May 24, 12:30pm to 5pm

Location: MacArthur Park Pavilion #4 Loop 410 West Access Road between Harry Wurzbach and Nacogdoches.

The price this year will be **\$10.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children under 5.**

Send completed form to: **Vallerie Hartfield—2410 Monticello Court, San Antonio, Texas 78223.**

To ensure a variety of sides, please contact **Barbara Lamm at 210-648-8001**- for coordination/ suggestions.

Here's my check for \$ _____ for ___ adults and ___ children. Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Please write **legibly**, and the name of your guest on the back of this form.

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Karen MacDonald has been a member of the MGCSA for 3 years. She lives in New Braunfels and fights the I35 traffic to make it here by 7pm after her work ends at 5pm. She likes our club because everybody seems to be nice to each other and willingly shares advice and their gardening tales. It is welcoming to have people to share gardening with.

Karen likes to find a plant that is happy. On the flip-side, she likes the challenge of finding an orphan plant, taking it home, and bringing it back to it's full beauty.



25th Anniversary

Festival of Flowers



Saturday
May 31, 2025
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

San Antonio Shrine Auditorium
901 N. Loop 1604 W (exit Stone Oak Parkway)
MGCSA MOBLE CHILDREN'S GARDEN
PLANT SALES, SWAPS, AND EXCHANGES
SEMINARS EXHIBITORS GARDENING AIDES
Bring your wagon and cart it away
SAWS is giving the 1st 1,000 attendees
a season friendly plant



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS! Wear your MGCSA name tag, tell them at the front door you are working at the garden club booth and you enter free. Otherwise, there is a \$10.00 Entrance Fee. Work some hours, and participate in the other activities for some hours. Sign up at May meeting or call Vallerie.



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See page 6 for what this bulb can give you.

MAY SPEAKER

From Charles Bartlett

This month, we're pleased to welcome Donald Gerber, owner of **Pollinatives Native Plant Nursery** as our speaker for our May MGC meeting. His topic for the evening will be "THE WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND WHY OF NATIVE PLANTS."

Donald will share his thoughts on creating a nursery and garden center from scratch, and give us the benefit of his encyclopedic knowledge of a wide variety of Central Texas native plants. His goal is to offer the best selection of native plants for your home habitat, wildlife, and pollinator gardens.

After many years of work as an engineering technician in California, Donald and his wife Melanie, moved to the San Antonio area to live closer to their grandchildren. Donald is a keen life-long gardener, a Master Gardener, and a graduate of the Master Naturalist program. His beautiful 5,000 square-foot nursery in Converse, features many hard-to-find native plants and has drawn customers from far and wide. He is a Horti-Bull advertiser and has supported the MGC with many great door prizes at our recent meetings.



Melanie and Donald Gerber

Another Successful Hollywood Park Yard Sale by Paul D Huegel

Once again the MGCSA beat the odds of threatening weather reports that failed to dampen our spirits as we successfully executed another Hollywood Park Yard Sale. The divine weather provider delivered picture perfect weather and a good turnout of volunteers and shoppers for three consecutive days. Of course, none of this would not been possible without our gracious host Ida Santiago who allowed us to use her homestead in beautiful Hollywood Park. Since this was a three day event (3-5 April) it took a lot of preparation and moving plants back and forth to protect our stock from the hungry deer population which reside in Hollywood Park. Plant sales were steady but not overwhelming like a one day event, so the volunteers had an excellent opportunity to bond and exchange our gardening ideas and experiences. We had a pretty good turnout of volunteers, but it could have been better since covering three days requires more people. Fortunately, some of us were able to meet the demand by working

all three days. While we purchased most of the plants sold, there were some donated plants from Alberto Del Rio and Charles Bartlett who have donated for every event. We also had donations from Barbara Lamm, Ken Wolfram, and from our newest member Mark Weigand and yours truly. These donations and the leftover plants from the Spring Bloom made a difference in our profit margin. Plus, our customers seemed to appreciate the plants donated by our members. In fact, a few customers actually commented on how they look forward to our sale every year because we have a good assortment of plants which are not readily available in local stores.

As the organizer of this event, my thanks go to Ida Santiago our homestead host, and to John Sells, Larry Cromer, Mary Martinez, Barbara Lamm, David Badorski, Alberto Del Rio, Mark Weigand, Sylvia Tamez, Arlene Hocka, Andrew Waring, Keith Massa, and Michael Stepp for their support in making this event a success. We had \$1,363 in sales and purchased \$588 worth of additional plants for this event which netted us \$775 in revenue to support our nonprofit activities.

SPRING HOURS
Tuesday - Sunday
9:30-6:00



CONTACT
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THE PONDEROSA LEMON

A Citrus Re-visited From Charles Bartlett

In the past, many members of the Men's Garden Club grew the 'Ponderosa' lemon, known for its HUGE 4-5 pound fruits. At a plant sale, we'd often bring a huge lemon to show our customers. We'd say 'If you want to grow bigger and better lemons, you have to join the MGC'. In the days when the club hosted city-wide flower shows at a local shopping mall, a 4+ pound lemon was sure to win a blue ribbon.

The Ponderosa lemon is a remarkable Citrus hybrid known for its massive, bumpy rind fruit, (often weighing between 2-4+ pounds), and a rich history. Originally discovered as a chance seedling in the garden of George Bowman in Hagerstown, Maryland in 1887, the tree quickly became famous. The purple-tinged flowers have an intense Citrus fragrance, the tree tends to be everblooming, and the flowers are self-fertile. The fruit retains a tart, juicy flavor similar to a traditional lemon, making it perfect for culinary uses, but with the added novelty of its enormous size.

The Ponderosa lemon was traditionally believed to be a cross between a lemon (*Citrus limon*) and a citron (*Citrus medica*). There has been some debate about the correct scientific name for the Ponderosa lemon, specially in light of recent genetic findings. In the past, the Ponderosa has been classified as *Citrus x limon* 'Ponderosa'. However, recent genetic research has unveiled a more fascinating lineage, revealing that the Ponderosa lemon is actually a hybrid between a citron and a pomelo (*Citrus maxima*), with no significant genetic contribution from the true lemon. However, as of now, the name *Citrus x limon* 'Ponderosa' is still widely used in horticultural circles, largely because it has been the established name for over a century and is recognized by gardeners, nurseries, and botanical institutions.

Ponderosa lemons were initially known as 'American Wonder' lemons and were named in honor of their large size. The fruits were later renamed Ponderosa, translating from Spanish to mean 'powerful', and were often described with the early nickname of "Five-Pound lemon"

One of the most famous Ponderosa lemon trees in the US is found at Logee's Nursery, a garden center in Danielson, Connecticut. Their founder William D. Logee established Logee's in 1892 and purchased a Ponderosa lemon tree from George Bowman in Maryland in 1900. The tree was transported from Maryland to Philadelphia to Connecticut via train and horse and buggy, and ten years after purchase, the tree quickly outgrew its

container and was planted in the ground. The Ponderosa lemon tree was one of Logee's favorite plants in his collection, and as the tree grew in size, a greenhouse was built around the established tree, known as the "Lemon Tree House." Logee's Ponderosa lemon tree became a national tourist attraction beginning in the 1950's, attracting thousands of visitors, and celebrities, including Katherine Hepburn, and Martha Stewart. Martha Stewart has also featured Ponderosa lemons on her TV show and after a TV segment, she purchased a tree for her garden in Bedford, New York. Stewart recently posted a photo of herself holding a very large Ponderosa lemon on her website. Today, the original Ponderosa lemon tree at Logee's is still alive and growing, now over 125 years old, and the tree is still used to produce cuttings for their commercial local and online sales.



Martha Stewart and her Ponderosa Lemon

Ponderosa lemons are an excellent source of vitamin C, an antioxidant that strengthens the immune system, reduces inflammation, and boosts collagen production within the skin. The fruits also contain potassium to balance fluid levels, fiber to stimulate digestion, and vitamin B6 to assist in transforming food into energy.

The Ponderosa lemon is fairly easy to grow in soil of average fertility and full to mostly sun. Whether growing indoors or outdoors in a container, or in the ground, at least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day is needed for best flowering and fruit yield. Lemon trees like a moist soil, especially when the fruits are developing in summer, but not so much that the soil stays constantly wet. Lemons thrive in a soil with a pH between 5.5 to 6.5, slightly acidic, but can tolerate our more alkaline soils and water in San Antonio. Ponderosa lemon is best grown in a warmer location (USDA Zones 9-11), and will need some winter protection in this area if planted in the garden. In the ground, the tree grows 6-8 feet tall, or perhaps one-half that size in a container.

Whether you're a Citrus enthusiast or simply looking for a unique addition to your garden, the Ponderosa lemon offers a blend of history, beauty, and practicality. Its striking appearance and rich genetic heritage make it a conversation piece and a valuable asset in any Citrus collection. It'll also WOW your neighbors!

Ronnie Grell
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Seen at the April Meeting. Clockwise from lower left: 1: New member Harold Kubicek with JoAnn and Marshall Fairbanks. 2: Guest Gary Cox and Charles Bartlett. 3: Alberto Del Rio and Ed Elbel with guest Chris Drawdy. 4: Guest Linda Trevino. 5: Member Shari Pfeiffer and guest Eva Shein. Linda, Shari, and Eva are proud members of the NEXTDOOR GROUP.



Program at the April 2025 Meeting

Suzy Crowley and her staff at the Casa Verde Farms Inc. were the guest speakers this month. Her staff included Steve Gallagher, Manager, Esteban Aguilar, Propagator, James Briskey, Supply Manager and Landscape expert, and Danny Maldonado, Production Manager.

Esteban demonstrated several methods of propagation and Danny provided the commentary. Some cuttings were ready to be put in the soil in three to four days, having been started with water and root starter. An 'ice plant' and a 'ghost plant' were used in the demonstration. The ghost plant, for example, after being cut, could be placed in soil after two days, in a sunny area and would not require misting

after planting. In a couple of weeks, roots would be visible.

James talked about caring for your plants in your garden. Water, while necessary, is also the number one killer of plants. It's important to know when water is needed, especially plants that are grown in containers. Plants with the same watering needs should be kept together. Lighting is also important for successful gardens. Container plants can be moved around to find their best lighting needs. Feeding plants means that we should provide them with compost and fertilizer.

Our members had comments about their own experiences with propagation in their gardens and their successes with gardening throughout the seasons in the San Antonio/Bexar County area.

THE NECTAR BAR - NATIVE PLANT NURSERY
 7600 Eckhert Rd., Suite #1 (210) 844-2381
 San Antonio, Texas 78240



Esteban Aguilar does the propagating and Danny Maldonado does the commentary. The Casa Verde team in action.

The Children's Vegetable Garden Program for Spring 2025 runs from February 15-May 31, 8:30-10:30 am. The program is for children 7-16 years of age. If you are interested in volunteering in the spring go to the website at sabot.org. Contact me, Vallerie Hartfield if you have questions at 210-240-1466. This is a great opportunity to share your gardening skills and to learn.

We will have a Vegetable contest May 17. The Junior Master Gardener Classes are winding down and the participants will receive certificates. These children are our future gardeners and club members. The children are looking for the bad bugs and weeds in their garden as they watch their vegetable plants grow.

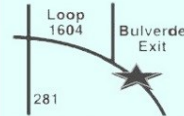
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COMMENTS ON THE HORTI-BULL

We want to hear from you!

We want your comments. Please go to the website and make comments.

What do you like?
What would you like to see added or deleted?

Men's Garden Club of San Antonio (MGCSA)

Open to men and women **2025 Membership Application**

Rates will remain effective until January 1, 2026

CK # _____

Cash _____



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

Make checks payable to MGCSA; Address:

Paul Huegel, 15619 Cloud Top, SA, TX 78248

This membership form is added for your convenience. If you can't print it, include the requested information on a sheet of paper and mail it and your check to the address shown on form. **PLEASE write legibly.**



The Casa Verda crew of Danny Maldonado-Production Manager, James Brisky-Supply Manager, Esteban Aguilar-Propagator, Suzy Crowley-Owner, Steve Gallagher-Manager are sandwiched in between club members Jeff Brown, Alberto Del Rio, and Paul Huegel.



Thomas Sako talks about a propagation issue with Suzy Crowley.

If you had sent me a picture, it would have been right here



Thursday AM and the volunteers are ready. John Sells and Alberto Del Rio kneeling, and Mike Stepp, Keith Massa, Hostess Ida Santiago, and Larry Cromer standing. Missing is Mary Martinez, the photographer and Paul Huegel, who has gone back to the greenhouse for more plants.

Thursday AM at the Hollywood Park Plant Sale and the plants are ready for the customers.



A big part of any Plant Sale is the time to sit and discuss gardening with your fellow club members.