



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

February

Number 02



Alberto Del Rio

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

February is the season for Valentine's Day and the Rodeo! It's also the season we're all beginning to get anxious to do our Spring planting. Let's hope that Mother Nature hears our plea and gives us some warmer, calmer weather for the rest of the month. Now is also the time to plant all the seed packets we ordered last month. If possible, plant some seed indoors under fluorescent lights for an

early start.

Last month was a typical January, with some cold weather, but we were fortunate to have Andrew Waring as our speaker giving us an excellent and comprehensive Cold Protection Plan to protect our tender plants. Andrew did a superb job - great handouts and a beautiful visual slide show. Thanks Andrew!

Special thanks are also due to Fanick's Garden Center for the bags of 'clean' compost. Fanick's is a great source for bagged compost containing no biosolids. They donated 2 bags for our January door prize drawing, and, for those who missed the January meeting, we have 2 more bags for the February door prize.

Dues are due at the end of the month. The benefits of being an MGCSA member are many - getting unusual and rare plants and bulbs, the knowledge from our speakers and great fellow members, great food and hospitality. We also have our picnic & barbeque in the late Spring. And, great door prizes!

We have several exciting events on the horizon. The Alamo Regional Science & Engineering Fair will be held at St. Mary's University on 22-23 February. For decades our MGCSA has provided a stellar panel of judges to award prizes in the Botany and allied Divisions. On 1 March, we have traditionally participated in the Earthwise Living Day at the Leon Valley Community Center. 300 trees will be given away to attendees, and we'd like very much to have a plant sale there. Grow some plants for sale quickly - we only have about 28 days to get ready! Looking forward to a great gardening year! -- Alberto Del Rio

MEMBERSHIP

From Vallerie Hartfield

- Attendance: January 2, 2025 27 Members, 6 Guests.
- We welcome all new members and guests. **New members at the January meeting: MS. Sylvia Tamaz and Mr. Jacob Solis.**
- Please contact Paul Huegel for any questions about your membership status.
- Happy Birthday to all February births.
- Healing and recovery to all who are sick.
- Strength, comfort, peace, and love to all who are coping with losses.

February 2025 Meeting

At the

SAN ANTONIO GARDEN CENTER

6:30 pm For Fellowship

Meeting starts at 7PM

Guest Speaker: Mr. Mark Fanick

COMING EVENTS

- 22, 23 February - Alamo Regional Science and Engineering Fair**
- 23 February - Irish Heritage Festival at the Leon Valley Community Center.**
- 1 March - Earthwise Living Day at the Leon Valley Community Center**
- 8 March -SAWS Spring Bloom at SAWS Headquarters on US 281**
- 31 May -Festival of Flowers at the Shrine Auditorium**
- Hollywood Park Garage Sale at Ida Santiago's home. Dates to be announced.**
- Traditional Men's Garden Club Summer Picnic at MacArthur Park. Date to be announced at the February meeting.**

COMMENTS ON THE HORTI-BULL

We want to hear from you! What do you like? What do you dislike? What would you like to be added or deleted?

Why don't you send us your article or pictures to be included in the Horti Bull?

From Vallerie Hartfield and Larry Cromer



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

February is a good time to plant shade trees. Among the recommended varieties for the San Antonio area are live oak, Texas red oak, Mexican white oak, cedar elm, Mexican sycamore, Montezuma cypress, bur oak, chinkapin oak, and anaqua. Plant trees at least 15 feet away from the house. Shade trees have the most impact in reducing air conditioning costs if they are planted on the west or south side of your home. Start the planting process by digging the planting hole and filling it with water to confirm that the soil around the hole is well drained enough to disperse the water within 4 hours. The hole should also be filled with water just before the tree is planted to help it get established.

If your soil is hard to dig up for the planting, consider a smaller transplant tree or rely on some mounding to reduce the depth you need to dig. Smaller transplants often become established more quickly than larger specimens and grow faster so there are more advantages than just not having a more difficult dig experience.

Use the soil you remove from the hole to cover the root ball and then add 4 inches of mulch on top of the root area. Surround the mulch with a ridge that will allow you to pool water in the area. Plan on watering once per week after planting unless it rains for the first growing season. Wait to fertilize until next fall or spring.

Two other important issues are to keep string mowers and other sharp tools away from the trunk to prevent wounds that will slow the tree's growth. It is also important to protect the newly planted tree from damage by deer browsing or antler rubbing. Use fencing reinforced by posts or square fence pieces far enough away from the tree that the deer cant reach it.

If you are a CPS Energy customer, check out their \$50 per shade tree rebate program.

In the vegetable garden it is time to plant potatoes, and you can still plant broccoli transplants if you do it early in the month. English peas, carrots, leaf lettuce, and turnips can also be planted by seed. Keep your greens and other vegetables side-dressed every 4 weeks with 19-05-09 fertilizer and harvest as you can use them. Use the extra onions in the rows for green onions to give an onion every foot the space to reach full size. They will mature in June.

It is too early to plant tomatoes in the garden but if you want a fast start for your plants, you can pot them up in February and transplant them into the garden in late March. For more information on this process consider attending a free "Rodeo Tomato Potting Up Class" at DEERC on Feb 15 at 9:30 AM (210-382-4455) or Milbergers on Feb 22 at 10 AM (210- 497-3760). Attendees that pre-register will receive a free potted- up tomato.

We had some cool weather in January, but the winter annuals fared pretty well. Take advantage of the snapdragons, calendula, sweet peas, and stocks for cut flowers. We could still receive some freezing temps in February so be ready to protect your cyclamen with agricultural fiber over the top. The winter flowers should last until the end of May. If temps are forecast to be under 28 degrees for any length of time you may have to include a heat source such as poultry lights within the fabric covers to protect the citrus.

On the lawn, consider aerating and applying one half inch of compost to address soil compaction, oxygen access and water efficiency. Either hire the process done by a lawn company or rent an aerator from a big box store and then get some compost from an organic soil supplier. The compost penetrates the aeration holes and has a major positive impact on the lawn.

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.

The Science Fair-Judges, Junior & Senior Division: February 22, 2025, Saturday

Irish Heritage Day-12-5 pm-3 hour shifts: February 23, 2025, Sunday

SAWS Spring Bloom-9 am-3 pm-2 hour shifts: March 8, 2025, Saturday

Hollywood Park Yard Sale-April, 2025-3 days, Thursday thru Saturday

Festival of Flowers-May, 2025, Saturday

Oblate Project-Fountain Garden clean up-and rehab February

AT LONG LAST AN EVERGREEN SUNFLOWER

By Charles Bartlett

The Awnless Bush Sunflower, or just Bush Sunflower is a beautiful native wildflower to consider adding to your Texas garden. Bush Sunflower is smaller than most other species of sunflowers, however, its gold color pops no matter where it blooms, with flowers 1-1 1/2 inches wide. And most importantly - its a perennial! A 'set and forget' plant, it blooms February to December depending on location.



Bush Sunflower (Simsia calva) has a mounding form, 1-2 feet wide and 12-24 inches high, and is native to Texas and New Mexico. It thrives in full sun and well-drained (dry) soils, making it an ideal addition to any sunny garden bed, rock garden, or patio container. Once established, it is extremely drought tolerant and requires little maintenance, making it a favorite for busy gardeners.

Bush Sunflower grows from a large woody root. This

woody root grows deeply, even in rocky limestone, and caliche locations. In the Spring through Fall, the cheery nectar-rich flowers attract a wide variety of pollinators, including butterflies, bees, and moths. Its dark green leaves



host the larva of the Bordered Patch butterfly. The seeds are smaller than annual sunflower seed, but game birds and songbirds relish the small, flattened seeds which are high in protein.

Simsia calva, the Bush Sunflower is a very versatile, evergreen plant which looks good year around, and can be grown beautifully in a wide variety of soils, from sandy, to clay, to rocky. It loves a sunny location and tolerates reflected heat well. It also makes an excellent cut flower, adding a pop of cheerful yellow to any bouquet. If you're looking for a civilized, native wild flower to add to your Texas garden, consider the Bush Sunflower. It is low maintenance, very drought tolerant, and adds a bright burst of color to any landscape.

A mature Bush Sunflower plant, and smaller 4" pots will be shown at Spring MGCSA meetings for your review.

Charles Bartlett

FEBRUARY SPEAKER: Our speaker this month is Men's Garden Club friend, Mr. Mark Fanick. Mark with brother Mike is managing partner at Fanick's Garden Center, Inc. Mark and Mike's Great Grandfather established the center back in the 1980s, and Grandfather was also a founding member of the Men's Garden Club. Thank Mark for our January door prizes as well as door prizes for the February meeting. Mark's topic this evening is 'TREES FOR THE LANDSCAPE'. He knows every tree they sell at the center, where and how to plant it, and how to maintain it. He will share this knowledge with you, and then assure you understand it all by answering your questions. Put on your thinking cap and come out and welcome Mark to our meeting Thursday night.



Mark & Mike

Ronnie Grell
Managing Partner

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Refreshments for February

M thru Z

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

RAINBOW GARDENS also at 8516 Bandera Road

January 2025 speaker

MGCSA board member, Andrew Waring spoke on Gardening in Cold Weather. Whether it is cold or hot weather we are experiencing, our gardens depend on climate and soil to succeed. Microclimates are also to be considered when planting. Soil retains heat and watering a couple of days before the expected cold helps the plant survive. Mulch, two to three inches, including leaves from your trees lets your plants make it through the cold times. It's also important to protect garden implements, including watering equipment. Winter watering does not have to be high, once or twice may do the trick. The supporting visuals and handouts that Andrew provided the members made for an excellent and practical approach to keep our gardens surviving and growing during difficult cold and even freezing conditions. Adding to the cold weather survival of plants, Charles Bartlett demonstrated how a heat lamp can be effective in our green houses. A lamp with a clamp, and a 250 W bulb that is at least three feet off the ground can do the job nicely. In addition, Charles also spoke about compost and contamination. A contaminant is biosolids. Much discussion centered on this topic of interest. It is possible to buy compost that is clean, free of toxic chemicals and biosolids. Andrew and Charles' presentation provoked much interest and discussion.



Mr. Andrew Waring, our speaker for January, came prepared. Don't know if he was ever a Boy Scout, but he sure subscribes to their motto 'Be Prepared'. He delivered a great presentation, had excellent power-point back up screen shots, and provided us with some informative hand outs. **Thank you Andrew.**



Clockwise from bottom-left: 1. Charles Bartlett came prepared to speak on the pitfalls of using biosolids, and he did. 2&3. Vincent Giustino and Betty Opiela show off their door prizes, a bag of 'clean', biosolid-free compost; which was donated by Fanick's Garden Center. 4. New member Sylvia Tamaz shows her raffle winnings. Sylvia brought a sick tree limb specimen to the meeting to get some healing advice. She was very happy with Mark Peterson's assistance. 5. New member, Jacob Solis and his Best-Buddy, pose for a picture with their raffle prize.





**WELCOME
TO THE
ALAMO REGIONAL SCIENCE
& ENGINEERING FAIR**




The judges in 2024—Al Del Rio, Joe Shiners, Robert Van Dusen, Paul Huegel, and standing, Charles Bartlett and Mike Stepp.

**ALAMO REGIONAL SCIENCE
& ENGINEERING FAIR**

We will be participating in the Alamo Regional Science & Engineering Fair (ARSEF) for the thirty ninth year. This two day event held at St Mary's University gives students an opportunity to present their projects that have won at the local level to be entered at Regional Level. Some of the winning projects at the Regional Level will advance to the State Level. Judging will be on Saturday starting at 1:45PM and ending no later than 5:30PM. Awards will be made on Sunday. Anyone interested can share their passion for learning and science within our San Antonio community by joining the volunteer team. As an ARASE Volunteer, you'll gain new skills and experience, meet interesting people, and enjoy a fun, family-friendly atmosphere. Volunteers need no specific qualifications and should be comfortable interacting with students who will do most of the talking as they present their projects. The judges can ask questions but will mostly be listening to the students while grading specific categories of evaluation for an overall score. Our volunteers will meet under the leadership of our Chairman, Charles Bartlett after judging is complete for the Botany and Environmental projects to determine first and second place winners in the Junior and Senior Divisions.

There will be more discussion of this event at the February meeting.

Irish Heritage Day

FREE FREE FREE
Sunday, February 23
 From noon to 5PM
FREE & OPEN to the Public
Leon Valley Community Center
 6427 Evers Road, San Antonio, Texas, 78238

Opening music and piping in at noon on bagpipes, followed by the Bluebonnet Scottish Country Dancers. Storytelling by internationally known, award winning Jane McDaniel. Listen to music played and sung by award winning St. James's Gate and professional bass fiddle player Will Karns. Enjoy a performance by the Kelly Singers. Have a cup of tea and an Irish scone or a slice of Irish bread. Visit with Irish and Celtic vendors. Meet with the Irish Society, the Gaelic Athletic Club, and a representative from the Irish Consulate. The Harp and Shamrock's Passport to Ireland activities will be available for the children.



IRISH DANCERS



**IRISH
HANDICRAFTS**

CHILDREN'S VEGETABLE GARDEN PROGRAM

The Children's Vegetable Garden Program is for children ages 7-16. They meet every Saturday from 8:30-10:30 am at their gardening area at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens. The children have a garden plot and are responsible for preparation, planting, maintaining, and harvesting. They keep all of their vegetables. Instruction is provided by volunteers that consist of master gardeners and anyone who is interested in gardening and willing to assist the children. **In the spring of 1983, Brigadier General Dave Thomas and members of the Men's Garden Club of San Antonio established the legacy of the Children's Vegetable Garden Program.** Volunteers are always welcomed and needed. If you are interested, contact me, Vallerie Hartfield, at 210-240-1466. There is also program information on the web at sabot.org.

From Vallerie Hartfield

February 2025



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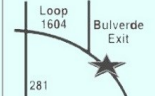


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2025 Membership Application

Sometimes we forget. This form is for you. Just print it, fill it out and mail it in with your payment. If you don't have print capabilities, just put ALL the info on a sheet of bond paper and with your check, mail it in. We will have the forms available at the February meeting for your convenience.

Mail to:
Paul Huegel
15619 Cloud Top
San Antonio, Tx 78248

Garden Spotlight

Starting in February I will be interviewing members asking them to share information about their gardening interest and experiences. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. Vallerie Hartfield.

Men's Garden Club of San Antonio (MGCSA)

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

Rates will remain effective until January 1, 2026



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.

CK # _____

Cash _____

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:

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