



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

March

Number 03



Alberto Del Rio

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

March is a month we look forward to because of an exciting event, the 'Spring Bloom' hosted by our San Antonio Water System. As in past years we'll have a very comprehensive collection of tomato plants for sale. Look for our special plants complete with blooms and small fruit!

This Spring is a time of much history of the MGCSA. Did you know, for decades, we've been leading the charge for all things horticultural, such as the San Antonio Botanical Center, the Master Gardener program, and the Master Naturalist program. The Botanical Center hosted their Grand Opening, Feb. 28, 1988 (37 years ago!) with much help from the MGCSA. The MGCSA and Dr. Calvin Finch organized the Master Gardener program in Feb. 1989, with the MGC hosting Class #1 in that year.

A special 'Thank You' goes to Mark Fanick of Fanick's Garden Center and Nursery for a wonderful Feb. program on 'Trees for the Landscape.' The door prizes provided by Mark were much appreciated, and his presentation was informative and enjoyed by all. My thanks also go to Mark Peterson, Milton Glueck, and Dr. Calvin Finch for their frequent mention of the MGC on their weekly radio gardening program sponsored by Milberger's Landscaping and Nursery.

We are all eager to buy new plants for the Spring. Now is the time to consider sharing your unwanted plants. Look for multiple plants in a pot and divide them, and pot up the extra ones for future club plant sales, such as the Festival of Flowers, 31 May. Or, share them as a door prize with our MGC members.

Alberto Del Rio

**March 6, 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**

Guest Speaker: Mr. Mark Peterson

COMING EVENTS

**8 March –SAWS Spring Bloom at SAWS
Headquarters on US 281**

**3, 4, 5 April– Hollywood Park 3 Day
Plant Sale at Ida Santiago's home**

**24 May— Men's Garden Club picnic at
MacArthur Park.**

**31 May –Festival of Flowers at the
Shrine Auditorium**

MEMBERSHIP

From Vallerie Hartfield

- Attendance: February 6, 2025: 33 Members, 4 Guests.
- We welcomed new members **Mary & Mark Weigend** at our February meeting.
- To pay your dues or get information on you membership status, please contact Paul Huegel.
- Happy Birthday to all March births.
- Healing and recovery to all who are sick.
- Strength, comfort, peace, and love to all who are coping with losses.

Refreshments for March

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 March 2025

From Dr. Calvin Finch

If you protected your cyclamen, primula, stocks and other winter annuals from the cold spells in January and February you may have a full slate of winter annuals still blooming in March. At least you probably still have some pansies, snapdragons, violas and calendula still performing strongly. Expect them to keep blooming until early May with the potential to replace them with zinnias, vinca, moss roses, and pentas as early as April if necessary.

Even if you did not protect your begonias from the cold you will probably have a few to re-sprout and also consider both the Whoppers and small versions to provide attractive blooms and foliage for the spring shade garden starting in March

The Monarch Butterflies probably won't be passing through the San Antonio area until April but you need to get ready for them in March. Zinnias, coreopsis, mist flower, blue curl, butterfly weed, tropical milkweed and pentas are favorite nectar sources. Most of them will be available in full bloom at your favorite nursery. If you don't have blue curl blooming in your landscape, make a note to obtain some seed to plant next fall so it will be available as a nectar source next spring.

If you have milkweed plants growing in your landscape when the Monarchs travel through in the spring or fall the chances are good that they will lay some eggs and hatch caterpillars.

In the vegetable garden you can still plant a potato crop. Dig a trench one foot deep or as deep as possible and plant a piece of seed potato with two sprouts every two feet. Cover the pieces in the trench with 3 inches of soil and then add more soil on top as the stems emerge. If your trench is less than a foot deep mound up the soil over the planted potatoes.

You can also plant radishes, lettuce, tomatoes, and beans in March. If you have access to Rodeo Tomatoes or other fast-producing determinate selections, pot them up until April 1 and then place them in the garden. During March put the potted plants in the sun out of the wind during March. If temps fall to below 40 degrees F, move them inside until it warms up.

If you had sand burs or crabgrass problems in the lawn last year apply a pre-emergent such as Crew, Barricade, or Dimension at the first of the month. Review the label instructions to determine which of the recommended herbicides best meets your preferences. You also have time to aerate and top-dress the lawn in March if you do it early in the month before you apply the pre-emergent. Wait until late April to fertilize the grass.

Recommended tree species can be planted in March. Protect the new trees from deer rubbing on the bark or eating the stems and foliage. Plan on keeping them watered every week if the soil surface over the roots dries out. Do not use a string mower near the trunk.



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.

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

Hollywood Park Yard Sale-Thursday thru Saturday, April 3, 4, & 5, 2025- 8am to 3pm.

Garden Club's annual summer picnic, Saturday May 24, 2025- 11am to 5pm

Festival of Flowers-Saturday May 31, 2025, 9am to 5pm

Oblate Project-Fountain Garden clean up-and rehab

Children's Vegetable Garden

CREATE A POLLINATOR PARADISE

By Charles Bartlett

We all appreciate pollinators which promote fruit and vegetable production. Increasing the number of pollinators in your local area is very worthwhile, but it's also another reason to create a beautiful flower garden. As much as we like to admire and smell flowers, flowers aren't just for our enjoyment. They are essential elements of the ecosystem. Winged bugs of all stripes love and depend on flowers for nutrition and survival. Let's do our part to nurture a robust pollinator population by planting varieties of plants which benefit them most.

What attracts pollinators to flowers? Scent - bees and butterflies can't resist fragrant flowers. Neither can we! Color - bees favorite colors are violet and blue. Hummingbirds favorite color is red, followed by purple and orange. Flower shape - hummingbirds prefer tubular shaped blooms, while bees prefer flat, open flowers. High pollen/nectar - some plants are nectar rich, such as honeysuckle vines, while others have a type of pollen that isn't spread by pollinators, but by the wind.

If increasing the pollinators in your garden appeals to you, keep in mind a few tips for attracting pollinators. 1. Choose native species and wildflowers - wildflowers sometimes get a bad press for appearing 'weedy' - but those kinds of plants are what your local pollinators are used to and are the most beneficial to those populations. 2. Plant flowers away from high traffic areas. The less disruption from humans, animals and machines the better. You don't like being pestered while you're trying to eat, do you? 3. Provide water and/or

'puddling' stations. - pollinating is thirsty work! Bees often get dehydrated during the day, so leaving them some shallow pools of water greatly helps. Add small stones to the pool so that they have something to stand on, while they drink. Small mud puddles are also ideal for butterflies, providing them with a source of salt/minerals.

Although bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds are the most



favored pollinators in the garden, they certainly aren't the only ones benefiting your garden. Other pollinators include bats, moths, flower flies, beetles, and even dragonflies. These other bugs may not be as well known, but they all play an important role in our gardens, despite their lack of popularity. Most of these insects suffer from misinformation and a general distaste due to their looks, but don't judge a bug by its cover! Instead, plant night blooming plants like moonflowers which attract moths and night time bugs. Don't limit yourself to the daytime - let your landscape shine even at night.

BOTANICAL GARDENS CHILDREN'S VEGETABLE GARDEN PROGRAM

The Children's Vegetable Garden Program for Spring 2025 is February 15-May 31, from 8:30-10:30 am. The program is for children 7-16 years of age. If you are interested in volunteering this 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 have a Vegetable contest and Junior Master Gardener Classes that upon completion receive certificates. They are our future gardeners and members. Ongoing Project: The plots are being rebuilt with more spacing between plots to provide more working room for the gardeners.

SPRING HOURS

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



CONTACT

**210-846-7099
info@pollinatives.com**

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Garden Spotlight

I will be interviewing members to ask them to share information about their garden interest and experience every month.
Vallerie Hartfield

SAWS SPRING BLOOM - March 8, 9AM to NOON



Get ready to “bee” the boss of your landscape when SAWS Spring Bloom bursts on the scene Saturday, March 8!

This year’s event is all about “bee-ing” mindful of your water use and learning how the plants you choose for your landscape can save water and help pollinators thrive. SAWS is ready to help you sweeten up your landscape for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds with the right plant selection.

Tap into horticultural and water expertise from a wide variety of community organizations and browse plant sales for native plants, herbs, and drought-tolerant ornamentals. To dig deeper into drought resilient landscaping, check out our distinguished speakers, interactive activities and horticultural experts for practical tips.

The first 1,000 adult guests will receive a free WaterSaver plant.

EXPERT SPEAKERS IN THE BIG TENT

9:30 How You Can Help Pollinators ALL YEAR Long

10:30 Landscapes in Drought: Survival Strategies



Watch out! Mark is doing some pruning. Guarantee! You will not fall asleep while Mark is talking.

April Speaker

Our April speaker will be **Mr. Mark Peterson**, a long– time friend of the Men’s Garden Club. His topic for the evening will be:

“My favorite Fruit Trees: selections, planting, maintenance” Mark will offer his thoughts on favorite fruit trees that do well in South Texas.

FROM SAWS GARDEN STYLE: Mark A. Peterson was a conservation project coordinator for San Antonio Water System before retiring. With over 30 years of experience as an urban forester and arborist, Mark is probably the only person you know who actually prunes trees for fun. When not expounding on the benefits of trees and limited lawns, you’re likely to find him hiking San Antonio’s wilderness parks or expounding on the virtues of geography and history to his friends.

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Italian Pun:

Did you hear about the Italian chef? He pasta way. We cannoli do so much. His legacy will become a pizza history. Here today, gone tomato, but it was his thyme to go. I am sending olive my love to his friends. His wife is really upset. Cheese crying.

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Marie Reyes has been a member of the MGCSA for over a year and especially enjoys the company of all the nice and informative gardeners that she gets to meet. Her interests include vegetables and flowers and especially loves the opportunity to get plants that members bring to the Meetings. Marie also helps Marion See with the hospitality table every month. Thanks, Marie, we are glad you joined the Club!

Keith Massa, a member of one year, says he likes our Garden Club for all the information and volunteer opportunities it provides. His interest in gardening also extends to helping other people maintain their gardens. Keith is currently working on getting a horticulture degree. Good luck with your studies, Keith, we are glad to have you on board!



Marie and husband Aldo



Keith and President Alberto Del Rio



Above, left to right: 1. Verna & John Dieterich and daughter Heather are happy with their tomato plant and door prize bag of fertilizer. 2. Vallerie Hartfield is shown with new members Mary and Mark Weigand. 3. Our 2 Hondoites, Ed Elbel and Brenda Hughes discuss the problems of gardening in Hondo, or is it the terrible traffic on Hwy 90 West these days.

Ronnie Grell
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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?

THIRTY-NINE YEARS AND STILL JUDGING

by Paul D. Huegel

We are proud to have been participants in the Alamo Regional Science and Engineering Fair (ARSEF) for thirty- nine of its sixty-nine year history. The Alamo Regional Science and Engineering Fair (ARSEF) promotes interest in the pursuit of scientific inquiry among middle and high school students through an annual meeting and research presentation competition. Each year the Alamo's best and brightest middle and high school students qualify for ARSEF out of more than 1,500 students competing at School and District Science Fairs for awards.

This is a great opportunity for people interested in meeting the next generation of young scientists from Central Texas. One of our most important goals of the MGCSA is to foster the spirit and passion for horticulture and the science of botany and other related sciences with the youth of the Alamo Region. By providing judges for the ARSEF, we are inspired by the quality of research and enthusiasm of the entrants over the years. This year was no different than the other 38 years of participation and our MGCSA judges were proud to honor six students with the Men's Garden Club of San Antonio Charles Bartlett Botany Award. The following student citations received a framed letter of recognition and a monetary stipend:

EVELYN WEISEL

As our tied first place winner in the Junior Division, Evelyn, with your project **"Coloring Nature: How Red 40 Affects Plant Growth"** our judges were impressed with your research and the scientific methodology. You should be proud of your research and what you have accomplished for the science of botany. As first place winner in the Junior Division, we also would like to award you a check for one-hundred and fifty dollars to spend as you see fit for your outstanding research and dedication to the science of botany.

SAACHI KASHYAP

As our tied first place winner in the Junior Division, Saachi, with your project **"Using Biodegradable Hydrogels To Conserve Water In Farming"** our judges were impressed with your research and the scientific methodology. You should be proud of your research and what you have accomplished for environmental science. As first place winner in the Junior Division, we also would like to award you a check for one-hundred and fifty dollars to spend as you see fit for your outstanding research and dedication to environmental science.

ANAHITA BALAKRISHNAN

As our second place winner in the Junior Division, Anahita , with your project **"Paving The Way For A Sustainable Future By producing Biofabrics Alginate (Seaweed)"** our judges were impressed with your research and the scientific methodology. You should be proud of your research and what you have accomplished for environmental science. As second place winner in the Junior Division, we also would like to award you a check for one-hundred dollars to spend as you see fit for your outstanding research and dedication to environmental science.

EMILY LIU

As our tied first place winner in the Senior Division, Emily, with your project **"The Effects Of Rainfall And Soil Conditions On Stormwater Runoff Pollution"** our judges were impressed with your research and the scientific methodology. You should be



proud of your research and what you have accomplished for environmental science. As first place winner in the Senior Division, we also would like to award you a check for one-hundred and fifty dollars to spend as you see fit for your outstanding research and dedication to environmental science.

CALEB ANDERSON

As our tied first place winner in the Senior Division, Caleb, with your project **"Spherification Of Liquid Fertilizer- A Novel Approach To Reducing Fertilizer Runoff Pollution Waste In Greenhouses"** our judges were impressed with your research and the scientific methodology. You should be proud of your research and what you have accomplished for environmental science. As first place winner in the Senior Division, we also would like to award you a check for one-hundred and fifty dollars to spend as you see fit for your outstanding research and dedication to environmental science.

JAHAN JANID HALUWANA

As our second place winner in the Senior Division, Jahan, with your project **"Assessing The Impact Of Reusing Algae For Bioremediation On Pesticide-Contaminated Water"** our judges were impressed with your research and the scientific methodology. You should be proud of your research and what you have accomplished for environmental science.

As second place winner in the Senior Division, we also would like to award you a check for one-hundred dollars to spend as you see fit for your outstanding research and dedication to environmental science.

I want to thank our seven MGCSA judges including Charles Bartlett, Alberto Del Rio, Joseph Shinnars, Keith Massa, Robin Van Dusen, Michael Stepp and yours truly for doing an outstanding job. A special thanks goes to Charles Bartlett who not only served as the Chief Judge but also provided the award funding.



**Our Judges: Robin Van Dusen, Keith Massa, Paul Huegel
Charles Bartlett, Michael Stepp
Back Row: Alberto Del Rio, Joe Shinnars**

THE IRISH HERITAGE DAY FESTIVAL

The Irish Heritage Festival was blessed with good weather and *Green* was naturally the dominant color of the day, from the club's plants outside to the many Irish related sales tables and events inside. The club's plant sales table had an abundance of tomato and pepper plants, flowering plants, and hanging baskets. Many of the plants were donated by Ken Wolfgram who chaired this year's event for the garden club.

Inside, naturally, Ireland and Irish was the theme of the day. Musical groups, dancers, and our Jane McDaniel, award-winning Story Teller, was on stage to the delight of all. Great tasting Irish Stew, Irish breads, cakes and other goodies were available at the snack bar. At the sales tables were Irish hand-crafts, jams, jellies, breads, cheeses and historical memorabilia. The crowd just bathed themselves in the atmosphere.

A big 'Thank You' to Ken Wolfgram for his contribution of plants for sale and for **sitting at the plant tables for 5 hours answering questions and giving advise to our customers and inquirers.** Paul Huegel transported the plants from the Greenhouse and Ken brought a load from his home. Thanks to our volunteers Vallerie Hartfield, Victoria Pompa, Mary Martinez, Jeff Brown, and yours truly.



At the Irish Festival, Ken Wolfgram, Mary Martinez, and Vallerie Hartfield enjoy a break in the line of plant seekers.

HOLLYWOOD PARK PLANT SALE

Hollywood Park calls it the Community Garage Sale, we call it the Hollywood Park Plant Sale, and have for many years. The 3 day event is the longest and most trying event that we participate in. This year it starts on a Thursday that happens to be our club meeting night, which makes the event even more challenging. We will need many volunteers to cover the 3 day, 8am to 3pm, event. Ida Santiago has once again 'loaned the club her front yard' and the hope is to fill it with plants that the folks in Hollywood Park will want to take home and use in their homes and gardens.

We will discuss the event and our needs at 6 March meeting. So please be ready to volunteer your time for this event. And remember, any nice looking plants you would like to donate are greatly appreciated.



Hollywood Park Plant Sale set up in Ida Santiago's front yard in 2024. Volunteer and help us to make this happen in 2025.

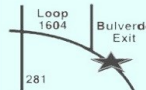
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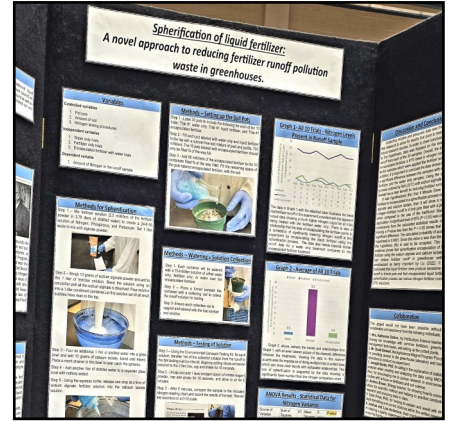


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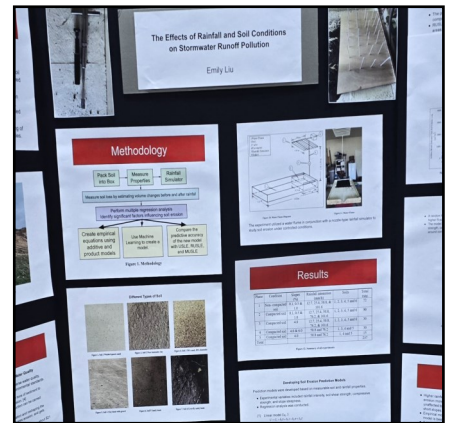
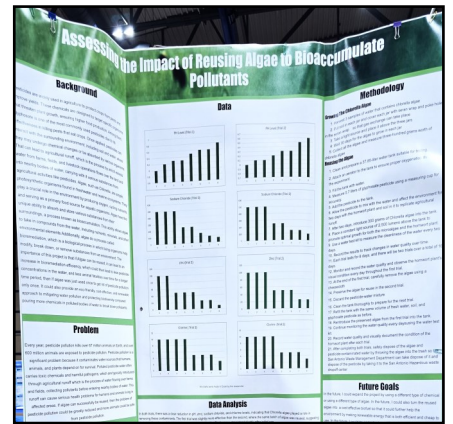


*Always
Welcomed*

PICTURES FROM THE FEBRUARY MEETING & SCIENCE FAIR



Clockwise from lower left: **From February meeting:** 1. Mary Martinez draws attention to our March door prizes. 2. Charles Bartlett at the plant sales table. 3. Mark Fanick talks about his South Texas trees. **From the Science Fair:** 4. Paul Huegel presented the 'Charles Bartlett Botany Award Citations' to winners at the Sunday afternoon Awards Ceremony. 5,6,7. Three examples of the presentation boards prepared by the Senior Division contestants. Some were professional looking, and some, not-so. **BUT,** content was the most important and deciding factor.



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Watch for our WEEKLY AD SPECIALS at www.milbergernursery.com

Proud of a plant you have growing at your home. Send us a nice clear and bright picture, and we'll put it in The Horti-Bull