



Horti-Bull

HORTICULTURAL BULLETIN

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Todd Mernin

Farmer's Market Herb Fest . Until then, keep social distancing and masking up. **TODD**

Fellow gardeners, it has finally gotten cooler. The hot/dry conditions have influenced landscapes. For me it was seen in the late bloom of crepe myrtles at a property that had not seen rain for several months. The recent showers from clashing air masses to multiple hurricanes have finally brought relief.

The fall is a time to start focusing on cold weather crops like broccoli and cauliflower for some, and a time to start preparing for winter for others. The preparation can vary from raking to getting sheets ready to cover plants or moving sensitive potted plants indoors. Whatever form of winterizing you may be doing, please take time to recognize this brief time of moderate weather is the time plants start to regrow following the heat that has put them in a form of dormancy. I look forward to seeing you at the Hollywood Park Event and at the Pearl

TAMALADA October 24

Our October Tamalada had its' origin in a June 1973 Club picnic hosted by Mr. Malcolm and Delphine Beck at their Organic Farm. They hosted the picnic for 24 years. During this period, the menu went through a brisket, chicken, hot dog, hamburger, Tex-Mex flair evolution. Today we celebrate the summer heat with a traditional bar-b-que chicken and sausage June picnic at MacArthur Park and the Fall weather with the Beck Tamalada. We honor Mr. Beck with the 'Beck Tamalada' for his contribution and devotion to our club and for the many contributions he made to the horticulture community as 'Texas' Father of Organic Gardening'. This year, for the fourth year, the Tamalada is being held at Barbara Lamm's home where there is plenty room to roam, and plenty to see and talk about. As the title may suggest, the Tamale is the main course, and delicious Tamales they are. The beverages and Tamales are furnished by the Club and members bring the add-ons. **All members will be contacted by either President Todd Mernin, John Opiela, or Darlene Badorski to see if you will be attending.** This will give us an idea of how much food to purchase and if you are bringing a dish.

Because the pandemic is still with us, everyone will need to wear a mask, bring sanitizer for frequent use and we will observe social distancing even though we are outdoors. Still, with these precautions in mind, we will have an enjoyable day.

Pandemic Year Election For MGCSA Officers by Paul D Huegel

The 2020 nomination of officers will be different this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I think it is useful to explain how our election normally works according to the Bylaws. The President is responsible to select a nominating committee of five individuals including the Chairperson of the Committee. The Nominating Committee contacts members who may want to run for office to their commitment to be nominated. Members on the Nominating Committee are eligible to run as well by nominating themselves for any office they may desire. All offices are open for nomination including two Director positions. If members are currently holding an office, they may run again as there are no term limits. It is far better if the members take the initiative to request their nomination by contacting any of committee members.

This year the President has requested that the MGCSA Board serve as the nominees for 2021 because they were unable to serve in a full capacity in 2020 due to the pandemic. However, this does not preclude other write in nominations to run for all the officer positions. Ideally, members who are interested and committed will take the initiative to run. When the club was much bigger, the Nominating Committee had a more formal and independent role of nominating. Because we are much smaller today, it is a two-way street and we encourage the individual member to come forward. Once the nomination slate is filled by at least one member per office, it will be published by mid-October by an email to all members. The election will be held at on October 24 at the Tamalada this year instead of the normal November meeting. On behalf of the President, I Paul D. Huegel, will act as his Nominating Chairman. If anybody wishes to run for office please contact me at 210-493-9853 not later than October 15, 2020 so that you can be added to the slate of nominees. I will contact each of our 2020 officers to confirm their nomination.



20 MGCSA Calendar of Events

October 1: Board meeting at Joyce's, Approx 5pm. Bring a chair.
No General Meeting.

October 1, 2, & 3: Hollywood Park plant sale as planned. 8am—4pm.

October 17: Herb Fest at the Pearl Farmer's Market. 9am—1pm.

October 24: The annual Malcolm Beck Tamalada at Barbara Lamm's home. Kicks off at 11am, eat at noon.

November: Celebrate Arbor Day, date and time to be announced.





Calvin's Corner

By Dr. Calvin Finch, Retired Texas A&M Horticulturalist

Horti-bull Gardening Calendar for October

If you did not plant your winter vegetable transplants and seeds or if some did not germinate or survive, go ahead and plant them again in October. It is also a good idea to plant second and even third sets of seeds such as radishes because they mature so quickly. Quite often leaf lettuce can fail to germinate if the soil temperature is too hot or if the seed is covered with soil. Reseed, as necessary.

Broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, collards, and Chinese cabbage transplants should be in place along with seeded carrots, beets, rutabagas, lettuce, and turnips. Late in the month spinach transplants can be planted if the temperatures cool down enough. November is not too late for spinach.

It works best when the preemergent herbicide for winter weeds in the lawn and shrub borders are applied in early September, but it will do a reasonable job if it is spread now. Select the preemergent that identifies your most notorious weeds as one of its targets. For example, Amaze emphasizes control of grassy weeds such as annual bluegrass, but it also lists and does a good job in preventing henbit and chickweed. Seek the advice of a knowledgeable staff person at your favorite nursery but also review the label of a product before you purchase it. In addition to Amaze consider Dimension if grassy weeds are your main problem, or Gallery if the main issue is broadleaf weeds.

October 1 is the recommended time to apply fertilizer to your lawn. There is a special formulation identified as "winterizer" recommended for this application. The "winterizer" should offer its nutrients in a 3-1-2 ratio with a fast release source of nitrogen. Formulations such as 18-06-12 and 15-05-10 are among those available. The first number is the percentage of the nitrogen source in the bag.

The nitrogen is a fast release form because the grass at this time of the year must absorb and organize the nutrients in the plant quickly before it is threatened by cold weather. The nitrogen and other nutrients are not used for growth at this time of the year but are structured and stored in forms to contribute to cold tolerance and then a fast green-up in the spring.

Your lawn will not require much mowing in the fall and winter unless you are encouraging a sustainable winter lawn of rescue grass, annual blue grass, and/or horseherb. Supporters of such a winter lawn are gardeners who have decided not to irrigate, have shallow soil, and considerable shade. If conditions are right such a lawn can look good and is easy to manage. For more information seek out my article on the topic from the archives of my articles on plantanswers.com. Continue to mow your winter lawn at the same height as your summer lawn.

It is not too late to plant wildflower seed for germination this fall and flowers next spring. Select one of the Texas mixes or your favorite varieties from the local nursery. For large quantities or even wider choices of seed varieties visit websites for Wildseed Farms in Fredericksburg (wildseedfarms.com) or Douglas King Seed Co in San Antonio (dkseed.com)

October is a big hummingbird and butterfly month. If you have sugar water feeders and nectar plants such as firebush, firespike, penta, and porterweed on the patio expect three kinds of hummingbirds- black-chinned, ruby-throated, and rufous. To meet the needs of the Monarchs and other butterflies duranta, zinnias, milkweed, mistflower, and lantana work well. All the plants can be purchased in bloom at your favorite nursery.

MGCSA Officers for 2020

President	Todd Mernin 210-218-4155
1st V.P.	Ivan Roman 210-845-7073
2nd V.P.	Vallerie Hartfield 210-240-1466
3rd V.P.	Robert McDaniel 210-542-1888
Treasurer	Phil Byrd 210-497-8044
Secretary	Larry Cromer 210-521-5350
Chaplain	Vallerie Hartfield

Directors

David Badorski	2018-2020 815-436-3970
John Opiela	2018-2020 210-508-7297
Margarita Rubio	2019-2021 210-837-1805
Ken Wolfgram	2019-2021 210-788-0177
Barbara Lamm	2020-2022 210-648-8001
Leonard Martinez	2020-2022 210-514-0584

Other

EX Officio:	Paul Huegel 210-493-9853
HB advertising:	Paul Huegel
Postmaster:	Larry Cromer
Historian:	Paul Huegel
Webmaster:	Ivan Roman
HB Editor:	Jeffrey Brown



How to Collect and Store Your Own Zinnia Seeds

Now that summer is fading, so are the blooms on our zinnias. It's getting time to clear out the summer flowers and refresh your beds with cool weather plants that should be arriving in nurseries soon. If you're interested in harvesting your own zinnia seeds to plant next year here are 5 tips to get you started.



Tip #1 Start with flowers that have dried naturally. The petals should be crisp and brown to the touch. Grasp the dried petals and gently pull them from the flower head exposing the seed.



Tip #2 - Examine the seeds which are arrow shaped and should be a solid dark grey to black in color. Healthy seeds will feel firm and plump and have a nice consistent color. Each petal has the potential to produce a viable seed which means it should sprout into a seedling provided it has ample water, sunlight and the correct temperature for optimum germination. On average, the zinnia flower will produce about 10% viable seeds. In many cases you will not get any viable seeds.

Tip #3 - Take time to look at your seeds. In the first photo on the left, these seeds are ones that I would save because of their shape, size, color and firmness. The seeds in the second photo might germinate but they are more likely to produce weak plants. You can see that the seeds are more spear shaped than arrow shaped. I prefer to save the best seeds for storage.

Weak seeds may prove to be viable, but most likely they will be inferior plants. It's important to understand that the tiny seedling only has so much energy stored in the seedpod that will enable it to germinate, produce roots and starter leaves to get the plant on its way to becoming a beautiful zinnia. If the seed is weak from the beginning, it lessens the chance of being able to make it through the process. You don't have to save a lot of seeds, but if you're like me and have an addiction to collecting seeds, you can always share them.

There are many gardeners that prefer to cut their dried flower heads off and leave them in the garden, others strip the flower heads and save them in paper sacks in the garage. Then there are people like me, that like to collect and sort them, strip off the petals and package them with planting instructions, while carefully storing them indoors in a closet with silica gel to keep them nice and dry until next year. Any of these methods are effective. Just pick a method that suits your style and go with it. Store your seeds in a cool, dry location so they won't get moldy. Also, there's nothing wrong with just buying zinnia plants when they are available, but it is very satisfying to grow your own from seed. It's always amazing to see what Mother Nature will present you with next summer.



Tip #4 - Hybrid versus Heirloom Plants / Seeds - What does this mean? Here is a definition from Garden Guides, " A **hybrid flower** is basically the offspring of two distinct species, bred by human manipulation. Simply put, flower growers choose among the best growths and manually pollinate the flower to achieve specific results. This can result in flowers bred for certain colors or other desired characteristics."

Let me simplify that for you, as it relates to seed collecting. **If you collect seeds from a hybrid plant, the seeds will not bloom true to the hybrid plant from which they were collected.** Instead, these seeds will revert back to the original parents of the plants. On the other hand, an **Heirloom plant or seed** will bloom true to the parent plant. Seeds from a hybrid plant will surprise, delight, amaze and sometimes disappoint you, so gather these seeds and be amazed at what Mother Nature returns to you.



Tip #5 - Once you plant your seedlings, don't be afraid to thin your plants. It's exciting to see dozens of little seedlings sprouting and it's also normal for you to want to nurture every seedling that sprouts. **Be ruthless in thinning out your seedlings!!** I can't emphasize this point enough; otherwise, you will have an overgrown patch that lacks air-circulation and will be prone to disease due to overcrowding. Each plant will take up about 12"-15" in width when it matures. I try to leave about 5 seedlings per square foot and wait to see which ones grow the best. Sometimes I will wait until the first bloom to see what color the plant will be. You can get some beautiful and unique colors from cross-pollination.



Giant Eastern Swallowtail sipping nectar from a Zinnia.

Butterflies don't care how the plant looks as long as it is filled with nectar. It has been my personal experience that zinnias that I have grown from seed are superior in attracting butterflies when compared to some of the plants that I have bought at nurseries. Butterflies of all varieties, as well as other pollinators, flock to the zinnias and delight in the abundant nectar buffet presented to them. So, give seed collection a try. Who knows, you may find it addicting!

Happy Gardening, Candy Roach

Bexar County Master Gardener

Originally published in the August 2020 BCMG Scion

Onion, Garlic and Crawford Lettuce by Jeffry Brown

For all these "archived" articles you may find out-of-date references to plants or products as much of this goes back to 2003 or 2005.

I won't copy any of the following referenced articles here. But you can read them at the following net addresses (as of Aug 31 2020):

San Antonio Express News, GARDENING, etc. Sunday, October 16, 2005 has an article at:

<https://bexar-tx.tamu.edu/homehort/archives-of-weekly-articles-davids-plant-of-the-week/onions-garlic-and-crawford-lettuce/> called: **"Onions, Garlic and Crawford Lettuce" by Dr. Jerry Parsons**

A reference (the last one below) has a more complete descriptions of these subjects, particularly there is information on Crawford lettuce.

For onions it refers to:

https://www.plantanswers.com/garden_column/oct04/1.htm

This is a somewhat humorous account of Parsons:

https://www.plantanswers.com/Pure_Parsons.htm

Many articles on gardening etc. are listed at:

https://www.plantanswers.com/garden_columns.htm

I found the last article a few months ago. It is good since it discusses the culture of onions and garlic, a little about spinach, and has many positive words for and about Crawford lettuce. There is a paragraph about an early 1980's meeting with **MGCSA Club member Marshall Crawford** present, who had a whole Crawford lettuce plant with him.

There are 3 photos included, one of **Marshall and Irene Crawford**.

What also is interesting to me is the onions are a summer crop, but garlic should be grown here in winter. Since **garlic** is a fall/winter crop, it is timely to consider it during our cooler seasons.

Dr. Jerry Parsons. Back in the early days of my MGCSA experience one of the most popular speakers was Dr. Jerry Parsons, of Texas A&M. Each year he would show up at MGCSA with a slide projector presentation on the latest horticultural developments. Many of these were new varieties of fruiting or flowering plants. One of his favorite expressions was "hairlooms" for what people consider heirloom plants, such as tomatoes. In recent years we still have the annual rodeo tomatoes.



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Dragon Fruit (Hylocereus Undatus).

The flower I am holding in this picture is from the above family and we call it the Dragon Fruit. This family has about 18 species all native to the wooded warm regions of the West Indies, Central America, Mexico and Equatorial America. These were all formerly classified under the term Cereus. Hylocereus means wood cereus. They all require half-shade in a very warm and sheltering situation, and liberal watering during summer. *Info from: Cacti by J. Borg p.201*



For those of you that would like to try this plant, I would recommend the following: Patience, may take three or more years to get a bloom. First plant in a container that the plant will grow into, therefore no repotting/up potting. These plants need to have tight roots in order to bloom. Now you will understand why I take pictures at night of this magnificent specie and others that bloom only at night and once a year.

Beautiful picture and article from Tod Mernin

Ronnie Grell
Managing Partner

A logo for Rainbow Gardens featuring a stylized rainbow arch over a field of colorful flowers and plants. The text "RAINBOW GARDENS" is written in a large, arched font above the illustration.

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You Don't Need No **Stinkin** Space Or **Sun** to Grow **Fall Vegetables!**

by Paul D. Huegel

Looking to grow beautiful Fall vegetables in your garden but don't have the space or the sun? Here are some vegetables that grow in the shade will ensure you get a bounty every season, regardless of whether or not your garden has sun. Plant any of these 13 vegetables (or all!) in your garden, and don't worry about them getting any sun! It's as simple as that! What's more is that these 13 vegetables that grow in the shade don't even need a lot of care or maintenance. Shaded gardens are quite common these days, especially for those living in condos or apartments, as spaces are small. That doesn't mean that you can't have a garden though! Even though some of these vegetables can grow in full sun, they also thrive in the shade.

We can start with some leafy vegetables. **Leaf lettuce** is one of the easiest vegetables to plant and grow, and they don't require a lot of sun! Only requiring a couple of hours of sunlight per day, leaf lettuce is the perfect vegetable to grow in a small space. **Arugula** follows the same planting rules as lettuce, and you can also plant them side by side! It only requires 1-2 hours of direct sunlight per day, but even if you don't have any sun coming in, they will still grow well in complete shade. Also, **Endive**, another vegetable in the lettuce family also grows without any sun and requires little to no care. **Cress**, also known as watercress, is a beautiful vegetable that grows in almost any condition and makes some amazing salads! Be sure to give your cress plant plenty of water for a successful crop! **Swiss chard**, like the other leafy veggies **can be grown** in pots or containers and get a beautiful bounty every season! These leafy greens are grown the same way as lettuce and arugula! **Collards** grow exactly like Swiss chard. Perfect for shady gardens, collards are easy to grow and require little maintenance. **Spinach** doesn't require a lot of space, care, or sun. In this area plant spinach in late Fall when it is much cooler weather.

Now we can move into some cole vegetables and Fall is the perfect time to plant. You can plant from seed or buy transplants which I prefer. Broccoli is one of the most popular and my favorite cole vegetables. Little maintenance and only a couple hours of sun per day is required! Be sure to water regularly and give your broccoli organic plant fertilizer. **Cauliflower** grows the exact same way broccoli does, so go ahead and plant them side-by-side! Grows well in partial sun and requires little to no care. Keep an eye out for slugs and other pests. **Brussels sprouts** also require very little care and not a lot of sun. This cold weather crop prefers cooler weather and doesn't require direct sunlight.



Beets are an easy to grow veggie in the root vegetables family and will grow without any sun since they grow underneath the ground and don't require much care. Additionally, the leaves above the ground are edible and healthy to eat in salads or steamed. **Radishes** are one of those veggies that you can just plant them and forget about them. These root vegetables require minimal care, only a little bit of sun per day, and regular watering.

Peas are one of those vegetables that keep growing and growing, and don't require a lot of space or sun! Grow peas in raised beds for best harvest.

Thus, you can indeed grow a bunch of tasty healthy vegetables without much sun or space. So get started and reap the health benefits, save money but most of all enjoy the pleasure one gets from gardening.



Ken's Pottery Factory - pots, figurines, etc.

Pictures show only a few of the available concrete pots and or figurines that Ken currently has molds for. All pieces shown will be at the **Hollywood Park Plant Sale**, if you want to drop by and pick one up.

All pieces can be ordered from Ken either painted or unpainted. Unpainted pieces cost will be to cover the cost of the cement, and in some cases the difficulty of the casting. Contact Ken at kdwolfgram3@aol.com if you want pictures of any piece and to get further information.



The Greenies Urban Farm Needs You!

by Paul D. Huegel



The MGCSA has a rare opportunity to get in on the ground floor of something really big in the volunteer gardening world, which takes us back to when the Club was first chartered 51 years ago as the community service organization that our forefathers envisioned. Over the years we took the lead in establishing many of the civic minded garden programs that exist even today like the Children's Vegetable Gardening Program at the Botanical Gardens. David Rodriguez, the Bexar County Horticulture Agent and I have been discussing the advent of The Greenies Urban Farm which has been in planning and negotiation now for eight years with the city of San Antonio. Finally, approval was granted for the 10 acre site by the city.

So what is Greenies Urban Farm? The Greenies Urban Farm Project is a ten acre project to help supplement fresh, locally grown vegetables for the San Antonio Food Bank and various pantries. The Bexar County Commissioners Court has approved the first phase (1 acre) and we are seeking volunteers to help with the planting, maintenance, and harvesting of these vegetables.

Dates: Week of October 5 (tentative start date) – end of 2020 (Monday thru Friday)

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Greenies Urban Farm – East side San Antonio near the Joe Freeman Coliseum

Duties: Planting, maintenance, harvesting and more.

I will serve as our Club focal point and scheduler to ensure we get credit as a **MGCSA Work Party**. However, I need volunteers for our Work Party to make it happen. If we get enough members to form a Party we can make it work, but we must be committed to the dates and times we agree on. If you are interested in being a “charter member” of this worthwhile endeavor, contact me at 210-493-9853.

Your help is needed at the **Pearl Farmer's Market Herb Fest on 17 October**. Give Darlene a call at **815-436-3970** if you are able to. If you haven't been to the Pearl Farmer's Market on a Saturday, you are really missing a good experience!

There are a lot of things to do and see at the Tamalada—besides eating



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