



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)

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MGCSA Coming Events

May 5th: Regular Club meeting at the San Antonio Garden Center, corner of North New Braunfels and Funston Place. Hospitality at 6:30 PM and meeting starts at 7PM. See page 3 for info on our speaker Mr. Paul Gates and his topic for the evening.

May 25: Basil Fest at the Pearl, 9am to 1pm. See page 3 for details.

June 25th: Annual MGCSA Picnic. Good food, door prizes, and auction. See page 3 for a tidbit of info.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Todd Memin

Well we finally got rain!!! This past month we were skirted by major storms that created turbulent weather across several states, yet leaving us without rain. Our state of the aquifer dropped and I believe it will take a while to rebound. We still need more rain. All this talk leads up to the point of protecting our plants, both landscapes and crops. I personally have mulched my planting beds in addition to reducing the foot print of my backyard. I did this by hard-scaping with old bricks where nothing would grow. Now on to what else happened this month.

The Irish Festival was a success and was well attended. Met new friends and were able to get some new members. I personally loved the soda bread and homemade preserves. This next month we have the Basil Fest at the Pearl to look forward to. Hope to see you there. Till then, keep planting and growing with the love and knowledge of plants and those who have a passion for them. Todd

Flower of the Month is the Dianthus: (AKA) Sweet William

Dianthus like many flowering plants has been around a long time. Historically it came from Eurasia. It's name is derived from the Greek language and means: Devine Flower. Herbalists have been noted to use it to treat: cystitis, urinary stones, and other uses. This plant's flower looks like it has been trimmed along the outer edge, leaving a jagged edge. It is a biennial (growing for two years).

The plant prefers full sun to part shade and can grow to a height of two to three feet. There are many color combinations and varieties. Like many new cultivars, the fragrance is diminished from the original species. Often these plants are planted to create a mound effect. Treat it like a rose and deadhead spent flowers to prolong the blooming. I have just planted some in my yard and hope to have them for a few years. Good luck with this flower and may it provide you years of enjoyment.



Refreshments for our April meeting,

M thru Z

it's your turn. **We encourage you to stay after the meeting to help clean and straighten up so everyone can leave as soon as possible. It only takes a few minutes for the cleanup if all pitch in to help!**

MEMBERSHIP:

Attendance April 7, 2022: 31 Members, 4 Guests, 3 New Members. Welcome: Janet Hector, Shawn Castillo, Sarah Meghan Forrester.

- Happy Birthday to all for May.
- Healing and recovery for all who are sick.
- May eternal rest be granted to Charles Weimer.
- Strength, comfort, peace, and love to all who are coping with losses

Remember! May 5th meeting at the **San Antonio Garden Center**, 3320 North New Braunfels. At the corner of N. New Braunfels and Funston Place.





CALVIN'S CORNER

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

Horti-Bull Gardening Calendar for May.

Horti-Bull Gardening Calendar for May

At last, we received some rain for 2022. Expect the moisture to translate into lots of plant growth including the lawn. The required two mowing's prior to fertilizing should quickly occur. I believe the best fertilizer to use is the 19-05-09 slow-release lawn fertilizer available at area retail nurseries. One half of the nitrogen is in a slow-release form and the other half is in a quick release form. Mow St Augustine grass at 3.5 inches tall and mow Bermuda grass at 1.5 inches or shorter. Zoysia seems to do best when it is mowed at 2 inches. Treat buffalo grass as a groundcover and mow it at 5 inches or taller. If you mow it at a shorter height the weeds, including Bermuda grass, will overcome the buffalo grass. It is best to mow zoysia grass with a reel mower. If you must mow it with a rotary mower, ensure that it is sharp.

The snapdragons have grown out of their winter blooming pause and look pretty good. Expect them to perform acceptably for another month before the summer heat and rust disease take them out. The best replacement in the cut flower garden is usually zinnias. Use both the Dreamland Hybrid transplants and/ or showy seeded selections like California Giant. In addition to colorful blooms to decorate the flower garden and to use for bouquets, zinnias are a favorite nectar source for pollinators, including Monarchs, and a seed source for cardinals and other seed eaters.

Also, plant a large patch of annual sunflowers to provide more seed. The sunflowers are a special favorite of the goldfinches, including the resident lesser goldfinches. Treat the sunflowers like a wildflower and spread the seed obtained from a fellow gardener or the seed rack. Pread onto the soil in full sun.

If you want the Monarchs to lay eggs and produce caterpillars when they pass through the area next fall, plant milkweed. They only lay their eggs on milkweed plants. It is desirable to grow the native selections, but the tropical variety is the easiest to obtain and grow on short notice. To accomplish a planting of a native milkweed for the future, visit the sites describing the Monarch population initiatives on the internet.

For color in the shade, consider begonias, Penta, or coleus. The Whopper begonia is especially showy and easy to grow. In the sun moss roses work well in hanging baskets. For a deer proof flower in the sun plant the Cora vinca.

Tomatoes will begin producing harvestable fruit in the garden at the end of May if you keep the plants watered. Fertilize tomatoes in the garden with the same 19-5-9 product described for the lawn. Use Osmocote to provide nutrients for tomatoes growing in containers. For some control over spider mites apply a weekly spray of seaweed extract to the upper and bottom surfaces of the leaves. Peppers and okra will also prosper in May. Plant okra by seed and peppers as transplants. If you have had problems growing summer squash because of the squash vine borers, consider growing tatum squash. It can be used in the same recipes as summer squash and is resistant to the borers.

MGCSA Officers for 2022

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STILL wanted for the Horti-Bull - your inputs for future Horti-Bulls. Prefer receipt by the 20th of the month . The article can be about your current gardening effort, a past event, or some plain old good- or-bad life experience, or simply a gardening tip.

The Guest Speaker for May 5th MGCSA meeting: Mr. Paul Gates will speak about plant propagation.

Paul was an elementary teacher for over 30 years. While teaching all subjects, he taught his students to grow vegetables and flowers in their school gardens, in addition to teaching them propagation in their school greenhouse. Paul currently is retired and spends his time volunteering, creating art, making jams and jelly, and of course, gardening.



We lost another good member in March, Mr. Charles Weimer. Paul Huegel said it best upon hearing of Mr. Weimer's death— "I am sorry to hear that Charles has passed. He stayed faithful to the MGCSA even though he could not participate due to age infirmities. I think the last time I saw him he came to one of the Hollywood Park plant sales a few years ago. May he Rest In Peace in his heavenly garden." His memorial service will be May 7th, 10:00AM at the Coker United Methodist Church, 231E North Loop Road. Mr. Weimer is seen here with our Hollywood Park mascot.



The Annual BASIL FEST is fast approaching

The 12th Annual Basil Fest will take place at the Pearl Farmer's Market on Saturday May 21, 2021 from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

We will celebrate Basil, The Herb of Summer - *ORANYTIME* - with Seminars, Plants to Purchase, Cooking Demonstrations, and a Children's Potting Event.

Our Featured Attraction - the "Chefs' Challenge" will begin at 11:30 am

The ever popular Basil Fest is coming again. Although the garden club is not mentioned specifically, you will note in the bottom panel there will be **'Plants to Purchase'** and a **'Children's Potting Event'**. That's us! We will need people to man the plant table, and to take care of the kids at the Mobile Children's Garden. Also, anyone with plants to donate, please step forward. There probably will be two shifts, 9AM to 11AM and 11AM to 1PM. Robert McDaniel will be emailing out the sign-up sheet shortly. If you have never been to a Basil Fest, or a Herb Fest, you are missing a fun time whether you are working the club chores, or just walking around looking and doing. There are things to do, and a lot to see. If you are a dog aficionado , you will be amazed at the dog parade. Second Fest back, Chef Ginny, who has catered our Christmas Party on several occasions, won the **Chef Challenge**.

Welcome NEW Members: We are HAPPY to announce four new members to the MGCSA. Three people joined at our April 7th meeting: Shawn Castillo, Sarah Megan Forester, and Janet Hector. At the Irish Festival, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Deanno Camero of Leon Valley joined as Life Members. Welcome to all you folks and hope to see you as regular participants in club activities.

Annual Club Picnic

June 25

The picnic is one of our two big social events of the year. It is held at MacArthur Park on Westbound I410 access road between Harry Wurzbach and Nacogdoches. The June Horti-Bull will have more information and the sign up forms. Remember, It's not too early to be gathering your items that you want to donate for our auction.

Definition of 'heirloom' (âr'lōōm') tomato by The American Heritage® Dictionary: A Heirloom fruit or vegetable is "A cultivar of a vegetable or fruit that is open-pollinated and is not grown widely for commercial purposes. An heirloom often exhibits a distinctive characteristic such as superior flavor or unusual coloration."

Barbara Lamm provided four different heirloom tomato plant varieties to sell at the past Hollywood Park Plant Sale. Between club members and customers, they were all gone at the end of the day. As plants, they all looked similar, so careful marking and sorting was necessary to maintain their identity.—*Larry Cromer*

Heirloom Tomato Gardening from Barbara Lamm:

This year I planted four heirloom tomatoes: **Pork Chop**, a true yellow medium tomato that has a sweet tomato flavor with a touch of citrus; **Carbon**, a smooth large tomato that won the best-tasting tomato award at the 2005 "Heirloom Garden Show; **Green Giant**, most productive best-tasting at the garden

show with a large 1 Lb. green fruit, sweet and juicy. And **Dad's Sunset**, a large orange 10 oz. fruit, very smooth, uniform and keeps very well. I also had to try the heirloom eggplant called **KAMO**. Japanese chefs highly regard this variety for its creamy, dense flesh and sweet flavor The plants are super heat and humidity tolerant.



Currently I am doing a test on 12 different varieties, many of which were grown from the seeds I saved from tomatoes that I had grown. I planted 3 of each variety. I would like to compare, taste, production, diseases, etc.

The last few years I have had problems with squash borers. This is the fourth season I have used treatment with mint and so far I am able to have squash; however, last week I had a visit from the feral hogs that took out three plants. To top it off, daughter Pam looked out in the creek bottom and there was a cow enjoying the beautiful grass. Just one of the joys of gardening.

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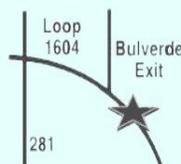


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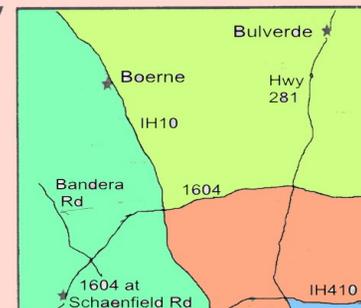
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11 Health Benefits of Drinking Rainwater.

Scientific review: Dr. Heben's Team

Rain water is known as the purest water in the world, because it still has no additional minerals or dirt obtained from contact with soil or stones. There was a research held in Australia showing that rain water is safe to drink, as long as it is collected in clean containers and properly filtered. However, since rain water contains no minerals, we should add mineral intakes if we consume rain water for more than 1 month.

1. Contains Alkaline pH-Since rain water is still pure, it has the same pH as distilled water and RO (Reverse Osmosis) water. We know that alkaline water gives health benefits like promoting detoxifications and healthy digestive system. Rain water, like alkaline water, helps neutralize blood pH in our body. The toxins and free radicals will reduce the blood pH, making it slightly acidic. Consuming rain water or alkaline water will neutralize the pH, making our body system work more efficiently.

2. No Fluoride and Chlorine-Chlorine is used to kill germs in tap water, while fluoride is obtained naturally from the soil. Consuming tap water high in chlorine and fluoride can cause many health problems, for example gastritis, headache, and damage organs due to corrosive effects of chlorine.

3. Anti-cancer-The alkaline pH in rain water is known to inhibit proliferation of cancer cells, since it helps restore the neutral pH of our blood and body cells. This makes rain water act like antioxidants. Herb experts in India suggest every cancer patient to drink more rain water. It is believed that the rain water from the first monsoons has the best advantages. When rain water is not available, spring water can be used instead.

4. Treatment of Stomach Problems-According to Indian traditional medicine, it is advisable to drink 2-3 tablespoons of rain water on an empty stomach every morning. The alkaline pH helps neutralize the stomach acid and soothe the irritated stomach mucosa. Moreover, rain water lacks in chlorine, which is known as a corrosive agent that can sever any ulcers.

5. Promotes Healthy Hair-Rain water is very mild, since it lacks minerals absorbed from the soil. Our hair likes the mild natural water. Washing hair with rain water helps take away dirt more effectively since rain water works well with shampoo and soap. The alkaline pH promotes hair growth and stronger hair, since acidic pH can damage that keratins and follicle, thus making the hair brittle.

6. Promotes Healthy Skin-The alkaline in rain water helps maintain moisture and elasticity of the skin. The best effect can be obtained by drinking and bathing with rain water. When we bathe/shower with rain water regularly, our skin will look youthful and radiant. Showering with rain water also makes the mind calmer, ideal to do after having a bad day or a tiring working day.

7. Prevents Acne and Boils-Washing face and body with rain water help cleanse the skin more effectively, washing away bad bacteria that cause acne and boils. The alkaline pH helps soothe inflamed acne and boils, thus reducing the swells and pain.

8. Brightens Fabrics-Washing clothes with rain water gives big advantage in laundry activity. Detergent works well with rain water, so we can use smaller amount of detergent.

9. More Beautiful Garden-If we water the plants in our household with rain water, the plants will have brighter color, and look more fresh. The flowers will bloom much faster.

10. Healthier Pets-Wild animals like deer, birds, frogs, reptiles, even insects like to "bathe" and drink rain water. Some animals like to run and bathe during the rain, they seem happy playing under the rain. They use rain water as their natural medicine. When drinking rain water regularly, their fur will look shinier too. Be careful of only using filtered rain water though, since unfiltered rain water can cause our pets getting sick.

11. Reduce Monthly expenses -while we have to pay monthly bill for using tap water, using rain water for drinking, bathing and doing laundry occasionally can reduce our monthly water bill. Rain water also works well with soaps, detergents, and shampoo, that it will lather much more than when using tap water.

Cautions: Rain water lacks in minerals, so we have to take necessary minerals like sodium, calcium, and fluoride from somewhere else, for example from natural unrefined sea salt and drinking Mineral water. We must make sure that the rain water is free from contamination. We must make sure that the water filter is in prime condition. Contaminated rain can lead to water-borne diseases like gastroenteritis. Pregnant women should not drink water, except when it is already boiled or when using very good water filter. The rain water may carry some Microbes like Toxoplasma, fungi or bacteria which can interfere with the growth of the fetus, even causing abortion.

From Vallerie Hartfield

CHILDREN'S VEGETABLE GARDEN PROGRAM - Vallerie Hartfield

Please Don't
Walk on the
Garden Beds!

The children have planted all of the vegetables and are beginning to harvest some of them. They are taking care of the vegetables and looking forward to the vegetable contest on May 28, 2022. We need garden club members to be judges. Please let me know if you are interested or contact Olivia Roybal, oroybal@sabot.org, 210-536-1425.

History Repeats itself! We shall return, and we did!

By Paul D. Huegel

After thirteen years of nomadic moving from meeting location to meeting location, the MGCSA has returned to its roots at the Garden Center.

Our history with the Garden Center goes back to 1969 when we first became a club. At that time we held meetings at places like the Witte Museum and Handy Dan's. The first official meeting at the Witte Museum in April 1969 came after committees were set up to draft our charter and by-laws. Interestingly enough the speaker's topic back then was "St Augustine decline lawn disease" which was affecting many lawns in San Antonio at that time. It was not until July 1970 that the club selected the Garden Center as its permanent meeting place. The club President then was Ted Williams (no, not baseball's legendary hero). The club had 61 members back then which was pretty good for a club just getting organized. On November 13, 1969 the club had its first annual dinner meeting at the Garden Center with 90 people attending.

The Garden Center was the ground zero for all garden and horticultural activities back then as the Botanical Center (now San Antonio Botanical Garden) did not exist. In fact, the Botanical Center was in the planning phase that year with Dr. Dewers our Chairman of the MGCSA Board serving as a leader of this important project. Our first Horti-Bull was published in November 1969 which has become our primary source for documenting our history. Colonel Clarence K Darling was our first Horti-Bull editor.

The club had two more dinner meetings in February and December 1971 at the Garden Center. The December dinner meeting started the tradition of the Installation and Awards Banquet. Thus, the annual banquet had its origin at the Garden Center. In 1973 the MGCSA worked with the Garden Center in completing the landscaping around the building and completed this project in July of that year. In April 1976 the MGCSA participated in the Garden Center "Land of Freedom" garden show and won

the Sweepstakes Award with a massive display of horticultural talent. More than 200 ribbons were won by MGCSA members and the Club's name is the first on the silver trophy on display in the Garden Center. Also, in 1976 our now member benefactor Charles Bartlett who was the Horti-Bull editor in the bi-centennial year and was awarded the National Men's Garden of America Journalism "Certificate of Excellence" award at the National Convention. The groundbreaking ceremony for the Botanical Center also took place on July 21, 1976 in which all local garden clubs affiliated with the Garden Center participated with the MGCSA at center stage as the first and most prominent garden club who played a key role in its planning from its inception. The club participated in the grand opening of the Botanical Center on May 3, 1980 almost four years after the ground breaking. The linkage of the Garden Center is not only its proximity to the current San Antonio Botanical Gardens (former Botanical Center) but our club heritage as well. For many years the MGCSA continued to be engaged in Garden Center activities in addition to using it as our monthly meeting place such as the annual Spring Flower Show and other special events hosted there.

We kicked off our return to the Garden Center at our April 3, 2022 meeting with guest speaker Stephen Lucke founder and CEO of Gardopia Gardens who gave a chronology of the development of their mission of "growing healthy communities through garden based learning". Stephan provided information about the evolution of their gardens and the value of healthy lifestyles through gardening. Our longest serving member and benefactor Charles Bartlett presented an informative show and tell presentation following the guest speaker. We were pleased with that as it was nostalgic of what he did for many years at the Garden Center. We were also pleased to see several other vintage member in attendance. One of those members, namely Joyce Siebold made the comment after the meeting about the Garden Center saying, "It feels like I just returned home".



From left to right:

1. Mr. Charles Bartlette presents his informative show and tell.
2. Guest speaker Stephan Lucke gave a spirited talk on his interest and efforts in growing healthy communities.
3. Members at the serving table. As usual, members brought delicious 'snacks' and Marion did her award winning table layout.