

November 30, 2020

Dave Martin, Chair
Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy
2220 Barton Springs Road
Austin, TX 78746

Dear Dave,

AAGC is pleased to provide the final report due under our agreement with the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy – a summary of educational programs offered to the public.

As the attached narrative demonstrates, education is at the heart of what our 30 member clubs see as their mission. Despite the challenges of an ongoing pandemic, AAGC clubs delivered more than 117 individual programs, workshops and presentations.

Pandemic continued to have its effect as clubs could not hold their programs at the Garden Center, and some clubs were unable to continue their efforts at all. Most showed the resilience AAGC has shown since its inception in 1955, and found ways to continue their educational efforts by going virtual.

The number of people reached was 2,829. This is probably a conservative number. Many clubs recorded their programs and made them available online afterwards. Others produced new programs on video, and we don't have an accurate number of how many people were reached through this media. We also know the shows and exhibits clubs put on is another way to educate the public about what makes an iris, an orchid or a rose an "award winner." A few clubs were able to hold these events before the pandemic shut things down and provided one-on-one education in these settings.

The report of our educational programs would not be complete without noting the other part of what AAGC contributes to the Zilker Botanical Garden through its agreement with ZBGC, and that is our volunteer effort. Based on the volunteer reports submitted over the past year – 3,340 hours were spent on education - developing program content, and publicizing it through newsletters, websites and social media, with one of our main vehicles of promotion being the ZBG website. ***Our clubs' commitment to education represents almost 31 percent of our overall volunteer hours of 10,870.***

In the coming year, AAGC intends to work with club to assist them in doing formal evaluations and assessments of their programming. Several clubs such as Austin Pond Society noted that they relied on "*Good responses from all attendees, but had not done any specific assessments.*"

The Austin Herb Society did a survey of members asking them to rate the last two years of their educational programming. Findings from 35 responses indicated ratings between "1" as "Loved It," and "2" as "Good," with average response 1.5. Those results like the anecdotal information gathered by other clubs was used to shape programming for FY 2021.

On behalf of our Executive Committee, officers and members of our 30 clubs, AAGC looks forward to our continued partnership with ZBGC to benefit Zilker Botanical Garden.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Ferrier
President

Marion Alsup
VP Education and Volunteers

Karen Kalergis
AAGC Rep to ZBGC

Austin Area Garden Center
Report on Educational Activities
Fiscal Year Oct. 1, 2019—Sept. 30, 2020

The Austin Area Garden Center mission is to “promote the education of citizens and youth in the art of gardening.” This fits in well with the COA’s Activity Objective for Zilker Botanical Garden, which is “to provide horticultural displays and programs that enhance the beauty of public spaces and increase knowledge about plants” as well as Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy’s mission of “Inspiring people of all ages to treasure, promote, and protect the botanical wonders of our world.”

Austin residents of the past felt a need for a Garden Center. They thought that their efforts would be more effective if they had a building to meet in, so six garden clubs joined together, raised funds and built the Garden Center, completing it in 1964. The hope and excitement of both gardeners and city officials was evident in newspaper articles of the time.

Gardening, nature and art education is provided by our member clubs. Currently, 30 member clubs fulfill our education mission through their programs, most of which are free and open to the public. Some of the topics from AAGC’s adult educational activities are listed below.

The **Austin Area Begonia Society** shares the Aims and Purposes of the American Begonia Society, which have guided that organization since its founding by Herbert P. Dyckman in 1932.

- * To stimulate and promote interest in begonias and other shade-loving plants.
- * To encourage the introduction and development of new types of these plants.
- * To share information in regard to kinds, propagation, and culture of begonias and companion plants.
- * To bring into friendly contact all who love and grow begonias.

We welcome newcomers to join us and share our love of begonias.

FY 2020 programs included:

- Propagation from Cuttings (12 attendees) (Valerie Morris)
- Thick-Stemmed Begonias (13 attendees) (Valerie Morris)
- Winterizing Begonias (15 attendees) (Valerie Morris)
- Challenge Begonia Sharing (12 attendees)

The **Austin Bonsai Society**’s mission is to provide guidance and education for individuals who wish to expand their knowledge and skill in the art of bonsai. Activities include lectures, demonstrations, beginners study group assistance, hands-on workshops, annual show and sale, and “digging trips” to collect native plant material. ABS maintains a library of bonsai books, videos and magazines. Visitors are always welcome at activities.

FY 2020 topics included:

- Juniper (Todd Schlafer from Denver)
- Cedar Elm Root Work (Brandon Baldauf)
- Exposed Root (Eric Schrader)

Zoom meeting topics were

- Bonsai for Beginners
- Crafting Shohin (Mike Lane, Ft. Myers, FL)
- Kingsville Boxwood Shohin
- Literati (Jim Doyle, Harrisburg PA)
- Juniper Styling (Bjorn Bjorholm)
- LSBF Artist Jennifer Price

Members’ workshop topics include:

- BYOT (bring your own tree) – Winter Care
- BYOT—Repotting
- BYOT Tropicals

- BYOT Juniper
- Master Bonsai (Kathy Shaner)

The **Austin Butterfly Forum** is dedicated to butterfly conservation and to enriching people's lives through butterflies. The Austin Butterfly Forum organizes field trips, conducts butterfly counts, promotes native plant gardens, performs conservation activities, and meets monthly for an educational presentation. This community of butterfly enthusiasts also enjoys programs on dragonflies, damselflies, bees, beetles, spiders and arthropods in general. Activities include butterfly identification walks and monthly programs in the Garden Center.

FY 2020 topics included:

- Annual Members' Show and Tell
- Discovering Leafmining Moths and Other Insects
- Insect Decline in the Appalachians & a Roadmap Going Forward (Graham Montgomery)
- *Common Insects of Texas & Surrounding States* (authors John & Kendra Abbott)

The **Austin Cactus & Succulent Society** promotes the interest, study, propagation, conservation, and public awareness of cacti and other succulents.

FY 2020 programs included:

- Grafting (Roy Mata)
- Leaf Biology of "Leafless" Cacti (Jim Mauseth PhD)
- Sugary Spines, Leafy Flowers and Other Unusual Desert Adaptations in Cacti (Jim Mauseth PhD)
- The Succulent Flora of Southern Namibia (Jeffrey Poehlmann)
- Conservation, Cacti and Succulents Around the World (Woody Minnich), Cacti and Succulents of the Texas High Plains (Alice Liles)
- A Journey to the Big Bend (Wally Ward), Speaker Dan Mahr

The **Austin Daylily Society** seeks to encourage and foster the development and improvement of the daylily and to foster public interest and knowledge of the species for home and civic beautification.

FY 2020 programs included:

- Fall Daylily Auction
- Annual Plant Swap
- Top Picks for Irises (Ellen Singleton)

Zoom meeting topics include:

- Shrubs & Other Perennials (Don Heiskell)
- Best in Austin & Fall Club Order (Agata LaRue)

The mission of the **Austin Herb Society** is to educate members and the community about herbs, including propagation, landscaping, history, folklore, culinary, medicinal and decorative uses. AHS sponsors the Herb Garden in Zilker Botanical Garden, an annual Plant Sale, and a Speaker's Bureau with volunteers available to speak on many topics at events throughout the community. Members also enjoy the monthly offsite meetings of the Culinary Study Group, Herbal Product Study Group and field trips. Monthly meetings feature educational programs along with herb-inspired refreshments.

FY 2020 AHS programs included two TWiG programs (Talks and Walks in the Garden) and these presentations:

- Gifts of Good Scents- 36 attendees (Beth Johnson)
- What's All the Fuss About Cannabis?- 51 attendees (Lucinda Rudin)
- Immune-Boosting Herbal Remedies & More- 48 attendees (Autumn Schulze)
- Phytonutrient Gardening- 43 attendees (Joe Urbach)

Zoom meetings included:

- An Herbal Bouquet- 36 attendees
- AHS Members speak on each aspect of AHS focus on herbs (Décor –Aline Guillot, Culinary – Lucinda Rudin, Herbal Products – Maria Carbonell, Landscaping – Kate Alsobrook)

- Herbs to Build Immunity and How to Build a Fairy House- 38 attendees (AHS Members Andra Millian and Roberta Showerman)
- Why Fall is the Time to Plant More Herbs- 35 attendees (Judy Barrett)

Austin Organic Gardeners club is the oldest continually operating organic garden club in the United States. Our mission is to educate the public, grow community and build healthy soil using natural organic methods. Our goal is healthy food for everyone and the long term sustainability of our planet.

2020 programs included:

- Seasonal Gardening Tips- 28 attendees (Linda Wall)
- The Mechanics of Organics - 23 attendees (Jeff Farris)
- Gardening with Fungi – 60 attendees (Phillip Balke)
- Soil Health & Human Health- 60 attendees (Kara Kroeger)
- Eden East Farm- 60 attendees (David Barrow)

Zoom meetings included

- Photo Sharing – 15 attendees
- Secret Song of Plants – 30 attendees (Andrea Cortez)
- Gardening Naturally- 50 attendees (Jeff Ferris)
- Urban Gardening & Self-Watering Container Gardening- 50 attendees (Trisha Sutton)
- History of Black Farming in Central Texas – (live feed + online video recording)

Membership in the **Austin Pond Society** is a wonderful way to meet other pond lovers and learn about the many joys of having a backyard pond. In addition to regular monthly meetings, members also have an opportunity to participate in hands-on demonstrations and give back to the community by helping out in Zilker Botanical Garden, Mayfield Park, and area elementary schools where they teach and assist in building and maintaining ponds.

FY 2020 meeting topics included:

- Culinary Herbs to Enhance Ponds and Gardens – 35 attendees (Deena Spellman)
- Holiday Party – 52 attendees
- Native & Adapted Perennials – 35 attendees (Master Gardener Reeve Hobbie)
- Pond & Garden Lighting – 38 attendees (Bill Biggadike)

Zoom meeting topics included:

- Pollinators – 21 attendees (Chris Best, US Fish & Wildlife)
- Summer Pond Maintenance – 24 attendees (Shane Stefek)
- Wildlife Photography – 22 attendees (Jack Marshall)
- Koi Fish & Koi Care – 23 attendees (Ike Umar, Wild Rock Koi)

The **Austin Rose Society, Inc.** is an educational, non-profit organization dedicated to the cultivation of roses in the Austin area. We are affiliated with the [Austin Area Garden Council](#), the [American Rose Society](#), and the [Royal National Rose Society of England](#). We offer many educational opportunities throughout the year as well as opportunities for voluntary community service and good fun. Monthly meetings feature programs on a wide array of topics on rose horticulture. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month in the Austin Area Garden Center.

The **Barton Hills Garden Club** meets the fourth Tuesday of each month in the auditorium of the Austin Area Garden Center.

FY 2020 speakers included:

- Genesis Gardens, 32 participants (Organic Farm of Mobile Loaves and Fishes)
- Time to Plan & Care for Trees 28 participants (TreeFolks, Collin McMichael)
- Grow Green, 30 participants (Denise Delany)
- Companion Planting, 28 participants (Taelor Monroe)

Zoom meeting:

- TreeFolks, 20 participants (Collin McMichael)

Capital Area Judges Council teaches volunteers what they need to know about *judging*, entering, competing and chairing an NGC *flower show*.

FY 2020 programs in the Garden Center included:

- Enhancing Backgrounds (Suzanne Milstead & Beth Erwin)
- June Wood Containers (Jean Stewart)
- Clever and Inexpensive Containers (Pat Freeman)
- Holiday Plant Gift Exchange
- Aspects of Photography and Judging (Deanna Dossey)
- Handmade Clay Containers (Beth Irwin)
- Design of Several NGC Miniature Designs (Julie Johnson)
- Combination Plantings & Fairy Gardens

Other scheduled meetings were cancelled due to the pandemic, but members participated with emailed Mother's Day designs in May.

The East Austin Garden Club meets offsite on the 4th Saturday morning of each month with the mission of "beautification, education and adoration of God's creation." They have been holding Zoom meetings this year, and have also started a project of helping maintain the St. John's Community Gardens.

The **First Austin African Violet Society** is an educational organization dedicated to helping African Violet enthusiasts successfully grow, show, propagate, and hybridize these beautiful plants.

FY 2020 programs included:

- What Violets Like – Lights, Action, Thrive! (Marie Miller)
- Internet Resources & Other Information (Susan Kautz)
- Rules of Design (Mary Husk and Jim Williams)
- Grooming for Show (Penny Smith-Kerker)

Zoom meeting:

- Traveling with Violets (Penny Smith-Kerker)

The Garden Club of Austin is the "go-to" club for tips, knowledge, shared expertise and experience on gardening in Central Texas. Whether you are a long-time "green thumb" used to the vagrancies of our climate and growing conditions, new to the area, or just developing an interest in gardening, you'll find The Garden Club of Austin (TGCOA) a great resource and a fun organization. Founded in 1953 as the Men's Garden Club of Austin, the club changed its name to the Garden Club of Austin in 2002, opening up its membership to anyone interested in gardening.

FY 2020 programs included:

- Flower Seed Distribution (Robert Day, Laura Holland & Dwain Osborn)
- Annual Joint Meeting with Cacti & Succulent Society
- Annual Awards Banquet Luncheon & Reunion
- Invasion of the Plant Snatchers, (Adam Coffin)
- If Plants Could Talk (Master Gardener Reeve Hobbie)

No programs have been presented since March 2020.

The Garden G.A.N.G. All programs were cancelled this year due to the pandemic.

The **Heart of Texas Orchid Society** brings in nationally recognized speakers that are experts in their areas. Usually, the speaker will bring plants to sell. Society members bring orchid plants in bloom to display on the show table and these are commented on after the program. A plant raffle is held after the plant table commentary. We also have orchid auctions and two greenhouse tours each year, giving you more opportunities to buy and learn about orchids and their care.

FY 2020 speakers included:

- Orchids and Us- 30 attendees (Steve Arthur)
- Flora of Manitoba Province- 28 attendees (Tom Sampliner)
- Annual Christmas Dinner (33 attendees, offsite)
- Board of Directors Meeting- 9 attendees
- Show Prep and Discussion- 22 attendees
- Tropical Slipper Orchids- 29 attendees (Hadley Cash)
- Orchid Show & Sale
- Board of Directors meeting- 10 attendees
- Native Texas Orchids- 24 attendees (Dottie Woodson)
- Greenhouse Tour- 20 attendees (offsite)

Zoom meetings included:

- Board of Directors meeting- 10 attendees
- Lighting for Orchids – 25 attendees (Drew Martinez)
- Cattleya labiate- 47 attendees (Sergio Garcia)
- Hunting Bulbophyllums in the Philippines- 39 attendees (Bill Thoms)
- Business meeting- 15 attendees

The purpose of the **Iris Society of Austin** shall be to support scientific research, including the culture and improvement of irises, and to encourage garden visiting by the general public; to collect and disseminate information on the history, classification, hybridization, climatic range, and culture of irises; to promote shows and exhibitions for the purpose of educating the general public and fellow irisarians; to educate the public through public display gardens, published standards for judging, and local, area, regional and national meetings open to the public; and to do all possible to advance the cause of the American Iris Society.

Plein Air Austin was established in 2001 by a group of Austin artists who had been meeting regularly to paint in the many local parks and natural areas for which the Texas Hill Country is so well-known. In 2006 a board of directors was established and membership was formalized in the hope that the group would flourish and become a respected organization representing talented outdoor painters in Texas and beyond. In 2007, Plein Air Austin gained its 501c3 Nonprofit status and in 2017 joined the Austin Area Garden Center, Inc. Plein Air Austin currently hosts approximately 4 monthly paint outs in Austin and around central Texas, including Zilker Botanical Garden on the first Wednesday of each month. It also hosts demos, workshops with local and nationally known instructors, provides networking opportunities, regular member shows, an annual family picnic and an annual painting retreat in Texas.

The **Porcelain Art Club of Texas** serves the purpose of our state organization to stimulate interest, appreciation and skill in the decoration of fine porcelain. Our motto is “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

FY 2020 programs included:

- Landscapes (Alice Nelson)
- Pearls and Gems (Jane Marcks)
- Pat Sibigtroth
- Glass Ornaments (Susan Hilburn)
- Landscapes (Susan Hilburn)
- Candy Ferren

It is the mission of the **Texas Bamboo Society** to provide a common organization for Texas citizens interested in bamboo. Anyone is welcome to join TBS, but the primary focus will be on bamboo that thrives in Texas. The three goals of TBS are: to provide a source of information on the identification, propagation, utilization, culture, and appreciation of bamboo; to promote the utilization of desirable species through propagation and maintenance of stock plants for introduction and distribution to the general public; and to support bamboo research in the field, establishing whatever facilities deemed necessary to carry out research projects approved by the directors. The Texas Bamboo Society meets

on the third Saturday of each month. We usually meet in the Taniguchi Japanese Garden at Zilker Botanical Garden and do maintenance work in the bamboo groves, but also meet and work offsite.

The **Travis County Beekeepers Association (TCBA)** is a non-profit organization and a member of the Texas Beekeepers Association and the Austin Area Garden Center. It exists to promote common interest and general welfare of beekeeping, to protect honey bees, to educate beekeepers, encourage good bee management practices, and to encourage good relations between beekeepers and the public, serving the beekeeping community in the greater Austin and Travis County areas.

FY 2020 programs included:

- Annual Business & Planning
- Catching Swarms (Brandon F.)
- Other Hive Types (Nathalie Missery-Biggie)
- Preventing Swarming (Lance Wilson)

Zoom meetings included:

- Beehive Autopsy (Lauren Ward) and others

The **Travis County Master Gardener Association** is a service organization of trained volunteers: members of the local community who are willing to learn and help others and are able to communicate with diverse groups of people. Working to assist the AgriLife Extension Horticulture Agent in Travis County, Master Gardeners volunteered to educate residents throughout the county and at Zilker Botanical Garden.

- The first program of the 2020 AgriLife Zilker Educational Seminars series, presented free to the public in the Austin Area Garden Center, was Drought to Deluge, Creating the Resilient Central Texas Garden (Sheryl Williams and Kirk Walden). The remaining 2020 programs were cancelled due to the pandemic.
- Master Gardeners are provided an initial 50-hour course and yearly required continuing education. Monthly meetings include information about volunteer opportunities throughout the community as well as an educational program. FY 2020 programs included:

- Fitness for Gardeners (Damien Temperley)
- Plant and Wildlife Photography (Bruce Leander - Volunteer Photographer-in-Residence at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center)
- East Austin Garden Fair (JoAnn Hargraves)

Zoom meeting topics included:

- Growing Edibles - Too Pretty to Eat (Laura Wills)
- The 6 D's of Container Gardening Success (Kirk Walden)
- Bulbs: Nature's Wonders (Yvonne Schneider)
- Introduction to Native Bees (Vicki Blachman)
- Master Gardeners also serve as docents for Zilker Botanical Garden, as members on both the Executive Board and Board of Directors of AAGC, and as Board members of the Zilker Botanical Garden Conservancy.

The **Violet Crown Garden Club** was organized in 1924 by Clara Driscoll Sevier. It is one of the oldest garden clubs in Texas and enjoys membership in the [National Garden Clubs, Inc.](#) and [Texas Garden Clubs, Inc.](#) Monthly meetings include refreshments and fellowship followed by a short business meeting and program. Average attendance is 20-30.

FY 2020 programs included:

- Flower show Oct. 19-20
- Offsite field trip to Wildflower Center and Hill Country Water Gardens
- Ikenobo School of Japanese Flower Arranging (Alisan Clarke)
- Gardening Tips, Tricks and Tools (Sue King)
- Community Gardens Plant America (Deana Dossey)

Meetings after March 15 were cancelled due to the pandemic. Members devoted themselves to their home gardens and stayed in touch through email.

The object of the **West Lake Hills Garden Club** shall be the advancement of gardening, the encouragement of civic beautification, and the protection of our birds, wild flowers and native forests. Meetings are held in the Austin Area Garden Center and offsite. Members are staying in touch during the pandemic by sharing gardening photos and articles through email.

Programs for the **Yaupon Garden Club** in FY 2020 included:

- Offsite field trip
- Bulbs (Master Gardener Yvonne Schneider)
- Art and Gardening (Master Gardener Jean Graham)
- Pretty Faces for Shady Spaces (Master Gardener Yvonne Schneider)
- Surviving the Heat (Master Gardener Evelyn McMillen)

Programs for the **Zilker Garden Club** FY 2020 included:

- Taniguchi Japanese Garden & Family History (Evan Taniguchi)
- Holiday Crafting Workshop (Carol Nogle & C. J. Ronchetti)
- Holiday Party offsite
- Benefits of Mycorrhizal Fungus in the Garden (William Glenn & James Crowley of Barton Springs Nursery)
- Fitness for Gardeners (Patricia Colacino)

Submitted by Marion Alsup Nov. 15, 2020
Vice President Education & Volunteers
Austin Area Garden Center