

The Newsletter

of the

Big Country Master Gardener Association

01 March, 2017

Abilene, Texas 79602

A NEW BEGINNING in 2017

- ❖ A New President
- ❖ New Committees
- ❖ New Friends
- ❖ A New Newsletter
- ❖ A New Website
- ❖ A New Planting Season
- ❖ New Gardens

This newsletter is a short version of the newsletter after an absence of one for almost a year. This one features two articles, one written by Charlotte Rhodes, our president, *A Vision, A Plan and A Little Bit of Fun*, and one by Kathy Turner, the Chairman of the Resource Committee, who gives an update of the web site development.

You will see many changes in "The Newsletter" in the next few weeks and months. "Be a pollinator busy Bee" -- be patient, be willing to give your opinions, suggestions and start by helping the Newsletter get a name! **Complete the quick survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7KMWVSW> by March 8th.** Suggest topics you would like to have included, send poems, -- yes, poetry, cartoons, recipes, anything you think is appropriate for Master Gardeners.





A Word from Charlotte's Greenhouse...

A Vision, a Plan and a Little Bit of Fun

By Charlotte Rhodes, BCMGA President

Our Association is off to a roaring start with several things taking shape and some changes being made in certain areas. I have spent the past week trying to figure out what I wanted to do this article on and it finally came to me last night, *Organizational Structure, Communication and Teamwork.*

First I would like to tell you just a little bit about me which may help some to understand how I see and why I do some things. My husband is quick to remind me that not everyone thinks like me and I do have to remind myself of that often. I spent 10 years in the United States Air Force. The first four years as an EMT and the last six as an Air Traffic Controller, Supervisor, FAA Examiner, Assistant Training NCO which involved reviewing lots of operational plans to ensure safety and compliance. In 1988, I was a direct hire into the FAA where I spent the next 27 and a half years in various places. I have helped review different facility's policies and procedures helping them to get ready for inspections. At Abilene, I just wanted to work traffic because that is where the fun is and what is the most

rewarding. While in Abilene, I have been a trainer, union rep, am active with our Local Experimental Aircraft Association and hold a private pilot's license. I have even helped rewrite several sets of bylaws.

The last nine years before I retired, I worked Airventure in Oshkosh Wisconsin. During Airventure, Oshkosh Tower is the busiest tower in the world and on any single day during the week, there can be 10,000 aircraft on the ground at the same time. In a single 12 hour day, Oshkosh works more aircraft than Chicago or Atlanta does in a 24 hour period. Oshkosh Controllers are not just working inside the tower; they work from 5 different locations throughout the airfield and area, in a highly complex and ever changing environment while still working together. This could not happen without structure, defined duties and responsibilities with everyone doing their jobs, while watching out for their fellow controller and staying focused on the overall objective, the safe orderly flow of air traffic. Over time the structure was built and tweaked, but now it is the Teamwork and Communications that is paramount in order to make Airventure a complete success.

By now, you are probably wondering why I am telling you this since it has nothing to do with gardening. Well, while that is correct, it has everything to do with Organizational Structure, Communication and Teamwork. I have always told the people I trained that the more aircraft you have the more you have to control them (structure and organization) to make it all work. There has to be a plan. To me, the same applies with our dynamic organization with its growth, members working in many different areas, and the broad spectrums of talent we are so fortunate to have. The Control factor applies only to get things organized and to get a better structure established that can better guide others, so members know how to do their assigned or volunteered jobs. This structure also allows for smoother transitions between officers and committee members each year. We are aware of our challenges in this area and are working together on it, but it will take some time, so please bear with us. We are making progress on getting our communication avenues working and working with each other. Until those avenues are all set up, a certain amount of control and filtering will be required. Things may seem a bit chaotic at times but we are working to make things better for you in the long run.

Keep in mind, progress is happening, and it is happening because of Teamwork and Communication, even if you cannot visibly see it.

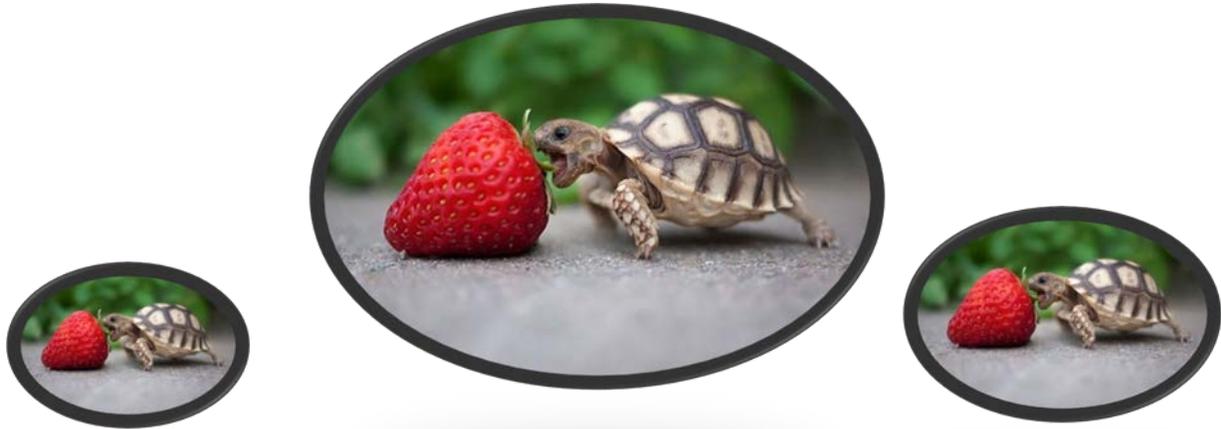
The Fun stuff is coming your way soon! *The Projects Committee* has been busy reviewing suggestions and the *Reoccurring Special Events Committee* is in full swing mode. By the time you read this, you will be able to go to *the new website (bcmgtx.org)* and view a calendar that lists all the upcoming activities and Intern Training classes that are Advanced Training for us. Most of the website areas will be under construction and as they become available for use, we will let you know.



Now I suppose I should say a bit about gardening. My greenhouse is doing great! I have had a challenge with some white flies and mealy bugs on a few plants but am keeping a good handle on it and learning more every day. My biggest challenge is with the Banana tree I brought back from Houston. It did pretty well thru the fall but the winter has been a bit different. I have had two black swallowtails hatch out but neither survived in the greenhouse. It stays pretty warm in there; although I put out water, fruit, and all the

blooms were on the flowers, there was no luck. I finally got all my bulbs planted, yes quite a bit late, and am curious to see what comes up and what doesn't. I kept waiting for it to turn cold and stay that way a bit, but no luck there either. I noticed the other day that something had eaten my Chard to the ground and am wondering if I still have a turtle or two meandering about somewhere. My beds are slowly getting cleaned up and ready for the plants I have and the ones I will get at the plant sale and the roses still need a haircut. There is never a dull or still

moment at my house and I wouldn't have it any other way. **Until next month....Happy Gardening!**



Website Update

By Kathy Turner, Resource Chairman

We have a website! www.bcmgtx.org is live and operational. Is it **complete?** Not by any means, but it is our starting place for the new platform that Jan Meyer and Ty Purcell worked on in the last 12 months! Thanks to both of them for laying the foundation!

With Terri Scott, Tom Lorch, Cheryl McCormick, Jackie Sledge and Misty Hayward helping, we should meet our deadline of April 27th in getting all of the materials to the programmers and having a website we can be proud of and offer it as a great resource to the public.

The membership section will be the first section to be completed. I've asked Cheryl to help me in getting the Members section tabs and materials together. We will have a 'Members Section' only, where you'll need to create a user ID and password for access. Once this is set-up, we'll send out a detailed email with directions on how to do this.

Jackie will take on primary duties for keeping the calendar updated. We will send out info on how you will need to get your information to Jackie, so we can make sure the calendar reflects *everything* that is going on!

Misty will be providing overall help with the site, as well as attending the training sessions on how to maintain the site after our development period is over with ACU. As we move into areas where we use our website for payment for workshops, etc., Misty will be working to process that information and ensure all of the financial transactions are successful.

Terri and Tom are stepping in and helping to get the structure of the different tabs created, as well as help with content, creating the forms and whatever else comes up. They both have experience in this area and will be key in helping meet our deadline and beyond.

Each of these individuals, as well as myself, will be attending training offered by ACU developers on keeping the site fresh and maintained. We will be soliciting materials from the various committees, including photos, in the very near future, We will also be asking for feedback, so please respond when we ask!

