



A letter from the President

Dear Fellow Gardeners:

We hope your holiday season is going well and with that said, New Year's is right around the corner. On December 31st, we will close out 2016 and our VMS system to record those that have entered their hours through and for the year 2016. We see some regular members that have not entered their hours in "at all" or "incomplete". As a friendly reminder, you need 6 continuing education and 24 volunteer hours for the year. There will not be any last minute on-line courses to fill in those hours so hopefully all have completed the necessary hours. Those that have not complied, will be dropped from the roster/email notifications and will not be qualified to recertify their membership next year until this is cleared and possibly a meeting with the Advisor on expectations, additional hours or projects. We owe dues on members to the TMGA every year and when your VMS is not up to date this causes more work for the Board and Advisor and complicates our tally. This is not new information and has been in place for two years now. Jenn may be sending out a last attempt communication to those not in compliance.

This does not apply to Interns. Interns still have until sometime in late Spring to get your 50 hours. A date TBA. Out of the 50 hours no more than 10 in an educational category meaning the rest should be volunteer time. Some of our Interns already have their hours in and kudos to you for not having to work through the hot months to finish up. Also, a requirement for Interns is that you must do a presentation or write a news article. When your hours and presentation/article are complete you will qualify for certification as a Master Gardener. Please honor your commitment per the contract during orientation for support of AgriLife. If you have questions on this, contact your mentor, me, anyone on the board, or Jenn. A side note for Interns, Jenn and I were discussing if you would like to meet sometime in January to make sure you are on the right path, need help for hours, or the VMS etc. Think this over and get with Martha McLemore so we can finalize a date. We were thinking of doing this in the office in case we needed the computer and internet.

We will be having our first board meeting soon and will be outlining our year on education, activities, guest speakers, clinics, expos etc. Hopefully the new Board will fulfill all of your expectations to have a complete calendar so our year will be laid out. We may tweak the By-Laws this year and you will be notified. By-Laws require ratification by members.

In closing out another year we are subject to audits on Arboretum inventory and financials on our bank accounts. Communications were sent out a couple of months ago and these audits should be concluded by the end of the year. Edgar was in charge of the Arboretum audit; Cindy was to arrange the financial audit but she cannot be part of the audit per By-Laws, however must be available to answer questions.

All have seen multiple communications on the 2017 TMGA State Conference which is a cruise out of Galveston to MX. Several of the Hidalgo County people are going and their President Rick Leland needs a roommate to share the cost of a cabin. If interested contact Sylvia Casselman at 281.614.9632. She is one of their gardeners, a naturalist, and past president there.

Look forward to a great new year and lots of meaningful accomplishments with new topics and continuing to have a positive impact on our community.

Chuck Malloy, President, CCMGA