



August 2009

COMAL GARDENER

Promoting Knowledge and Volunteerism

A monthly publication of the Comal Master Gardeners Association through the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Comal County, 325 Resource Drive, New Braunfels, TX 78132 (830-620-3440)

Volume XII

<http://comal-tx.tamu.edu>

Number 1

An Open Letter from Catherine Hall

When I became a Master Gardener, I joined a large, diverse group in Greensboro, North Carolina. We maintained no public gardens, but the extension office had many display gardens that showed what grew well and under what conditions. The soil was red clay, so I learned about drainage. And it rains in North Carolina. Don't pack your bags just yet. Their barbeque is sweet, shredded pork, topped with coleslaw on a bun! And there is NO Mexican food.

When the Comal Master Gardener program started, we were a small, but very diverse, group that maintained public gardens. I think Comal County citizens learn from these public gardens. As we expand our public outreach this year, my goal is for us to make a difference in five areas:

- **In the community.** Our gardens and educational programs are open to all, and my goal is to increase public awareness of our capability.
- **In our neighborhood.** Our neighbors and friends ask questions about our yards and gardens, and we tell them "Don't plant grass!"
- **For the extension service.** Our phone and email answers get the best information available through our affiliation with Texas A&M University.
- **For the extension office grounds.** Through the efforts of many, our display garden is beginning to take on a unique character. We will be working on the extension gardens this year, and I think we can make a difference in this garden.
- **In our lives and in the lives we touch.** My life has been enriched beyond measure by the Master Gardeners I have known. And we can make a difference in our work with children who are eager to learn need our guidance – "We don't need rain. We have a garden hose." Of deer, "Look, Mom, it's Bambi!" or armadillos, "They wear boots and drink beer, right?"

I look forward to a year of fun and learning. I know you do, too.

CMG August General Meeting
Tuesday, August 25 at 6 pm
Speaker: Shari Kilman
Topic: *Native American Herbal Remedies*

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•••Garden Posts•••

- There will be no August Herb SIG.
- Treasurer Donna Lehr's update on CMG account activity from June 23 to July 27 reports an income of \$953.50 and expenses of \$179.39, with an account balance of \$6516.52.
- Annual dues are payable by September: \$20 for individuals, \$35 for couples. Checks, payable to Comal Master Gardeners, can be mailed to the Extension Office, 325 Resource Drive, NB, 78132, ATTN: CMG Treasurer or turned in at the General Membership meeting.
- Get ready for CMG's Community Outreach Program on Fall Gardening with William D. Adams. The program will be held 1 to 3 pm, Saturday, September 12, at the Bulverde Senior Center. The website www.bulverdeseniorcenter.com has a map that might be helpful. If you have any questions, contact Pat Williford at r033@gvvc.com or 830-885-6762.
- Mark your calendars for Friday, December 11, the CMG 2009 Christmas Party, at the Forke Store in the New Braunfels Conservation Plaza, and for Gartenfest 2010. Gartenfest will be March 20.
- Your organization needs a few strong leaders. The Vice-President for Training office is available. Also needed is a chair for the Phone Bank and Email Center and Public Relations Chair. Anyone interested in these positions contact President Catherine Hall, 830-625-2077 or cmh@satx.rr.com
- New transfer Edie Zaiontz is a fourth-generation native Texan, born and reared in San Antonio. She joined the Bexar Master Gardeners in 1999, working with children's and water conservation activities. She is a member of the Lindheimer Chapter of the Native Plant Society and a Master Naturalist. She has a special fondness for antique roses and natives. Welcome Edie!

CMG Has a Blooming Program

by Nancy Pappas

Kids In Bloom is getting ready for another year of school gardening. We finished the year with a wonderful tour of nine elementary and middle schools in both Comal and New Braunfels ISD that grew some beautiful flowers, vegetables and herbs. We will kick off the 2009-2010 school year's gardening with a training session for our new area teachers on August 29, from 9 am to noon at the Extension Office.

As a CMG you can participate in KIB by growing transplants of herbs and vegetables to donate to our schools. We are also offering adopt-a-school gardens this year. Haskell Hart has really taken this approach to "hart." He has taken both Oak Run and Startzville Elementary under his wing and helped teachers at both schools make a huge impact on the kids and their school communities through gardening.

There is a noticeable trend in area schools for teachers to write grants to fund greenhouses and outdoor learning centers. Many are looking for ways to supplement test-based curricula with fun, exciting, hands-on learning experiences for their students. I am looking forward to learning more about the Junior Master Gardener Program and adding it to the KIB program to further enrich the opportunities we can offer teachers. Teachers that I work with remind me regularly how much their students enjoy the gardening

(Continued p. 6, see Blooming)

Keep Up-to-Date on CE and Volunteer Hours!

Send your CE hours to Don Tuff. He needs to know when, where and how many CE hours were earned. Send to d_tuff@hotmail.com Be sure to include all of the following: title of talk, speaker's name, date and time of talk, location and organization sponsoring the lecture.

Committee Chairs should submit all volunteer hours to Richard Wackerbarth, at gardener@dataplex.net

Father Lindheimer's Plants

by Lu Allen, Barbi Briney, Peggy Hamm, Bonnie Leitch, Susan Rench, Mary T Salmón and Marlene Skaggs

This month, we celebrate another year as Comal Master Gardeners. In that spirit, the staff wanted to honor Ferdinand Lindheimer, our spiritual father, and some of the local plants he found and identified for the larger world. We can give you only a sample of the thousands of plants attributed to this fascinating man, but we invite you to find out more about his plants at your leisure.

Ferdinand Jacob Lindheimer, Father of Texas Botany

Each spring in Texas, native plant gardeners and all those who relish the new blush of wildflowers, the freshly budding trees and the emerging green fields should utter a sweet word of thanks to the man who helped categorize hundreds of these indigenous plants. Ferdinand Jacob Lindheimer was among the first to realize the vast potential of the unique botanical treasures growing throughout Texas. He placed our region's flora on the horticultural map by collecting thousands of newly-discovered specimens from a variety of areas throughout Texas for classification and distribution. He shipped his collections of dried plant specimens to Harvard University where they were classified, named and then distributed to botanists worldwide. Lindheimer's name is included in the designation of 48 species and subspecies, ranging from the sunflower to the cactus. Lindheimer's achievements in Texas demonstrate his remarkable talent and aptitude for observation of his adopted land's natural beauty.

Born in 1801 in Frankfurt, Germany, Ferdinand Jacob Lindheimer was a well-educated young man with a passion for justice and a distaste for compromise. Because of his political beliefs, Lindheimer sought refuge in the United States in 1834. Soon after he arrived, he moved to a jungle paradise in Mexico to pursue his budding interest in botanical collecting. He became disgusted with the political conditions in Mexico and returned to the United States as a volunteer in the Republic of Texas Army. This brief military service introduced Lindheimer to the Texas terrain and its inhabitants, both native and immigrant, that served him well in his collecting travels.

In 1845 Lindheimer settled on two and one-half acres on the Comal River at the invitation of Carl Prince Solms-Braunfels. He continued collecting the bounty of plant specimens that would make him famous. He married in 1846 when he was 45. He and his wife Eleanor raised two sons and two daughters, although two other children died in infancy. Lindheimer was highly regarded in his hometown, and in 1852 he was unanimously elected the first editor of the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*. He held this position for nearly twenty years, fearlessly defending the right of free expression. In addition to his work as editor, his knowledge of political affairs allowed him to assume many public duties. He conducted a free private school for gifted students, served as Superintendent of Public Instruction in Comal County for several terms and was the first Justice of the Peace until increasing age and failing health forced him to live at a slower, more subdued pace. He died in 1879 after devoting the majority of his life to improving his homeland on the Texas frontier. His strong sense of education and preservation of the natural beauty of Texas surely entitles Lindheimer to the title of "Father of Texas Botany." LA

Reference: Brochure written by The Comal Master Gardeners available at New Braunfels Conservation Society

Senna lindheimeriana: Lindheimer Senna

One of my favorite plants is Lindheimer senna. The plant has also been known as velvet-leaf senna or puppy-dog ears. It sounds as irresistible as it feels.

Lindheimer senna is from the Pea Family, Fabaceae. Native to the U.S., Lindheimer senna is a perennial bush, reaching heights from three to six feet. Its yellow flowers are one and one-half inch long and are borne in terminal or upper axillary, spike-like racemes, much like the lily of the valley. Its five oval petals

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Lindheimer from page 3...

are crimped at the edges. The compound leaves have four to eight pairs of leaflets that are oval, sometimes pointed, covered with soft hairs and arranged spirally around the stems. The seeds provide an important source of food for birds.

Why is it my favorite? At summer's end as other plants are dying or passing on, the bright yellow flower of the senna smiles at me each new day. This plant is perfect for native gardens and looks great as a background plant, along a fence or parallel with a house. Architecturally, the sienna adds dimension and character to the landscape.

Fortunately for us in Central Texas, Lindheimer Senna thrives in dry, rocky limestone soil. The blooms appear between June and October. This plant escapes the summer "browning" of our gardens. As we continue to pray for rain and fall weather, the bright yellow bloom of the senna endures.

Senna leaves have been used as an infusion to relieve constipation, but senna has also been known to kill livestock. If it can kill cattle, it probably should be left alone.

Still, senna meets most requirements for my Texas wildscape. It thrives in rocky soil, provides seeds for birds and is a plant I cannot kill. Best of all, I do not have to do a thing to my senna -- just admire the blooms and share seeds with my birds.

See http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=SELI4; <http://uvalde.tamu.edu/herbarium/seli.htm>.
MTS

Onagraceae Gaura lindheimeri

Looking for Texas Hill country native perennials that are both beautiful and drought tolerant? Consider the versatile Onagraceae *Gaura lindheimeri*. It has white or pink whirling, butterfly-like four-petal flowers set on slender wiry stems that protrude off a two-to-three-foot loose, bushy clump. It is a must for your Hill Country drought-tolerant garden.

Gaura lindheimeri, also called Lindheimer's beeblossom, is a Texas native growing wild in Louisiana, Texas and northern Mexico. This plant is made for hot, dry climates, in other words, perfect for our current summer weather! Generally, plant it in full sun, although it will tolerate partial shade. It has a long taproot, which makes transplanting difficult but allows it to survive in droughts. It likes well-drained soil rich in organic matter.

Beeblossoms flower the entire summer and fall. Remove spent flower spikes to prolong the bloom period. To keep the bush relatively compact and refreshed, prune it severely before spring, near winter's end. Some years it might need a lighter pruning late in summer when there seems to be a break in its ever-blooming habit. After pruning, it will quickly grow back with renewed flowering.

Propagation is by division or seed. *Gaura* can bloom the first year from seed, if it is started in early spring. You also can divide clumps of the bush in spring to start new plants. Space plants 24 to 36 inches apart.

Gauras are resistant to almost all insect and disease problems except for aphids that are sometimes found in stem tips. Root rot might occur in heavy, poorly-drained soils. Pollinating insects love all *gaura* plants. Some of the popular cultivars include Corrie's Gold, whose leaves have golden-yellow markings, and Swirling Butterflies, a small cultivar, growing only two feet tall. Siskiyou Pink is also low growing with light pink flowers, and Pretty in Pink is even pinker. Crimson Butterflies is a recent cultivar. Other varieties include Pink Fountain, Ballerina Blush, Perky Pink and Ballerina Rose.

The *gaura*'s delicate flowers on long stems add a light airy look to a perennial border. It may also be used beautifully as a specimen plant. It is ideal for the wildflower or natural garden, in part because it self-sows. Finally, *gaura* is also excellent for cut flowers and very popular for use in bouquets. SR

(Continued p. 5, see Lindheimer)

Lindheimer from page 4...

The Yellow Star of Texas

Texas yellow star, *Lindheimera texana*, is also known as star daisy and Lindheimer's daisy. This yellow-flowered plant blooms in limestone soils from March through May.

The upright plant with coarse, hairy stems and leaves will often bloom when the plant is no more than two inches in height. The appearance of the plant is variable: it may have a simple stem or many branches. The alternate leaves can be spear-shaped to oval and from about one inch to five inches long.

Texas yellow star is found in grassy areas in the Central Texas Hill Country. MS

Rock Daisy (Perityle Lindheimeri)

The rock daisy is a small perennial shrub native to the Edwards Plateau. It grows in the crevices of rocky cliffs and does not do well in dirt. It is a spreading bushy plant attaining a height of about six to fifteen inches. The base of the plant is woody, and the leaves are ovate-lanceolate and one-half to two inches long. Rock daisies produce numerous yellow flowers that may appear to be yellow balls when in bloom. The small flowers cluster at the ends of the branches from April to September.

It is a member of the aster family. Uses in the landscape include planting in rock walls or between large rocks. This is not the same daisy as the Blackfoot daisy, even though several websites list them as the same plant. PH

Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country by Marshall Enquist. Lone Star Botanical, Austin, TX. 1987.

From Beast to Beauty

When I started working on this report, I was nursing some cuts and scrapes from removing a fallen branch of a hackberry. Some things, like squash, I believe, are unfairly named, but "hackberry" seemed way too fitting for this indigenous tree. As local historian Baron Schlameus noted, it's a shame that the only tree with Lindheimer's name is the hackberry.

Celtis lindheimeri, also called Lindheimer Hackberry, is a deciduous tree in the Ulmaceae or elm family. There are many varieties of hackberries in the Americas. As prolific as it is here, Lindheimer hackberry is found only in central and south Texas in the United States.

It especially grows around San Antonio, but it is known from the Edwards Plateau of Texas to northern Mexico. The extent of its range within Texas is uncertain. The tree grows to 40 feet, and its trunk to 60 inches in diameter. Its bark is packed with corky warts. Its crown is widely spreading, with multiple branches. The branches are thornless, spreading to pendulous, smooth young branches. Its leaves are uniformly covered with soft hairs on the undersides, as opposed to other hackberries, which gives the tree a grayish cast.

Hackberries' greenish, inconspicuous flowers bloom throughout the spring. The flowers then turn to small, reddish-brown drupes, fleshy fruit with single seeds, that birds and insects love. *Celtis lindheimeri* is a larval host and nectar source for *Adelpha fessonia*, the stunning Band-celled Sister butterfly.

The trees favor ravines and brush lands and full sun, even in our scorching summers. In fact, the Lindheimer hackberry is perfectly suited for this climate. Its heat tolerance is, and I quote, "very high" and its water requirement "medium low." It can tolerate drought with an "adaptable" soil requirement, in other words, even Hill Country limestone-clay. Its seeds sometimes remain viable for five years unplanted.

If a person is desperate enough, as perhaps both native inhabitants and some pioneers were, the fruit can be pounded into a mush and then eaten. Its wood is not strong or durable, so as trees go, it is of little commercial value, although it has been used locally as a fuel.

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Lindheimer from page 5...

Interestingly, given the weakness of their wood, hackberry trees may be very long-lived, perhaps surviving for a thousand years. That changed my mind a little about the tree: ten centuries of feeding beauty is not a bad feat. BL

Texas prickly pear: Opuntia lindheimeri

Among drought-tolerant plants, few can compare to the Texas prickly pear. This plant can be seen growing from any small crevice in rock or caliche, under the blazing Texas sun. I'm sure it would prefer a little more soil and perhaps a little shade, but it will grow where planted. In the home garden, all it needs is good drainage and room to spread as it grows.

Opuntia lindheimeri often grows five feet high and almost as wide. The pads are usually blue-green in full sun, but add a little shade and water, and they will turn green. The pads can be round or oval and are about four to ten inches in diameter, again depending on water. The pad has yellow spines that distinguish this species from the *O. phaeacantha* or tulip varieties. One of the spines will be longer than the others. Occasionally a plant will be spineless.

The prickly pear varies in bloom. The flower can be yellow, yellow-orange or red, and it can have one color or all three on the same plant. The tri-color blooms are one reason it is sometimes called "Joseph's coat" prickly pear. The flowers are two to five inches across and often crowded on the edge of the pad.

The fruit is edible and pear shaped, explaining the "pear" part of the name. The pear is very seedy and purple when ripe. Pretty in a xeriscape, the cactus will give strength and character to a flowerbed. Just be sure you put it out of reach of the paths, for the prickly pear is good to grow, but nasty to touch.

Texas Wildflowers, Cambell and Lynn Loughmiller. BB

Blooming from page 2...

experience. I hear many stories of students who have seen vegetables only in the supermarket, never on a plant before. I have met kids who "hate" broccoli. Then they try it when it is fresh from a plant that they have grown and find out how good it is -- much better than the grocery store version!

Kids In Bloom is not only about the plants though. We are also working to encourage teachers to try worm composting and rainwater collection. The JMG Program has many environmentally conscious programs that emphasize recycling and noticing our impact on wildlife habitats, like butterflies' life cycles.

Thank you to everyone that has shown an interest in KIB. It is a powerful experience to see those kids out in the gardens.

Please consider making an impact on the life of a child by helping teachers and students in our community learn the joys of gardening! Please call or email any questions to Nancy Pappas at azop@gvtc.com or 830-885-6016.

Comal County Fair Around the Corner

Start your plants and save your seeds. The Comal County Fair is coming to town, and Comal Master Gardeners will be demonstrating correct gardening techniques, educating the public about CMG goals and distributing seeds and plants to visiting children.

The CMG fair festivities will begin with the Fajita Social, Sunday, September 20. Sign up to bring some fajita accompaniment for the social. Then sign up to work in the booth Friday, September 25, Saturday, September 26 or Sunday, September 27. To volunteer or get additional information, contact Aleta Meyer at aleta_meyer@hotmail.com or 830-629-2929 or Jane Langley at janelangley@earthlink.net or 830-620-4264 or 830-708-0570.

Special thanks goes to Elizabeth Bowerman, who has chaired the fair committee since its inception.

August Gardening To-Do List

by Juleen Randall

“August in Texas” is usually the very definition of brutal. However, brutal began in June this year! Let us hope the *Farmer’s Almanac* is correct in predicting rains for August.

Instead of planting new landscape plants, this month is usually spent taking care of established plants. Mulching should be at the top of the list for August gardening chores. Mulching to a depth of at least three inches reduces watering requirements instantly, in some cases saving a day or two of watering!

Soaker hoses and drip systems should be a gardener’s second consideration. Anytime we have four weeks without at least an inch of rain, established plantings need water. Trees less than two years old need water at least every two weeks, preferably every week. Put a bubbler or soaker hose at the drip line and water with a low flow for one hour.

Regular foliar spraying with seaweed is another way to help both landscape plants and vegetable gardens survive these summer temperatures. Be sure to spray only in the early mornings or after sundown to avoid leaf burn. Establish the habit now and reap additional benefits once freezing temperatures arrive. Plants sprayed with seaweed withstand temperatures up to five degrees colder than those not sprayed.

With the exception of climbers, prune the dead, old canes from all roses, shrubs and trees. Remove spent blooms and seedpods from crape myrtles. Trim red tip photinias and dead head chrysanthemums.

Early in the month plant okra, New Zealand spinach, summer and winter squash, corn, eggplant and tomatoes. Mid-month, it’s time to plant potatoes. Late August start lettuce varieties, collards and greens.

In pots or flats, start the following vegetable seeds: beans, corn, cucumber, potatoes, shallots and garlic. In the first half of the month, plant rutabaga; last half, collards, endive, lettuces and greens. Give both seedlings and seeds bright sun but cool shade in the heat of the late afternoon, and they’ll be happier.

As always, herbs like Mexican mint marigold, mints, oreganos, rosemary, sages, and artemisia will do wonderfully in this weather without any coaxing.

If you want to plant some annuals for color, choose the thriving blue daze, celosias or cockscomb, zinnias, Rudbeckia, salvias, Shasta Daisies, coneflowers, portulaca or purslane. Vinca minor, or periwinkles, usually hold their own in our heat, too. One note: Watering zinnias’ leaves makes them susceptible to fungal attack.

This is the last month to spread Bermuda grass seed. Try “Sahara” Bermuda, which is said to be more tolerant to drought than common Bermuda. Watch for chinch bugs and grubs in lawns. Find grubs by digging a one-foot-square hole about six inches deep. If you see more than three grubs, apply an approved insecticide. For chinch bugs, cut both the top and bottom out of a coffee can. Bury the can about an inch in the soil and fill with water. If little bugs float to the top, apply an approved insecticide. If your lawn grows this month, mow high. Set your blade at 3” and leave the clippings on the lawn. Avoid weed killers when temperatures are above 85°.

Not only is the heat threatening our gardens, but keep an eye out for webworms, spider mites, aphids, grasshoppers and white flies. Use your insecticides, whether they are conventional or organic.

For more information, see www.naturalgardeneraustin.com/information/index.html

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**If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.**

--Marcus Tullius Cicero, Roman statesman, scholar, orator  
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August Gardening Opportunities

Ongoing, Mitchell Lake Audubon Center. Explore a place where nature is continually renewing itself, where birds, insects, and wild plants surprise you with a new spectacle around every corner. Visit a place where families, school groups and individuals can reflect and learn about the natural world just minutes from downtown San Antonio. 10750 Pleasanton Rd. in San Antonio, Texas. The entrance gate to the Center is located in south San Antonio, on Moursund Blvd. Take loop 410, exit 46, Moursund Blvd and go south 0.7 mile. The gate is on the left. Call 210-628-1639; or email mlac@audubon.org

Ongoing, 9:30 am – 6 pm. Butterfly Haus at Wildseed Farms, Fredericksburg. Hundreds of native Texas butterflies inhabit the 3,000 square foot Butterfly Haus. Open 7 days a week. Butterflies are wondrous brightly colored insects with two pairs of large, beautiful wings that are covered with iridescent scales. Like all insects, butterflies have 3 body parts, six jointed legs, compound eyes, an exoskeleton and a pair of antennae. The Lone Star State is home to more than 400 species of butterflies. Explore the magnificent beauty of these incredible creatures in the Butterfly Haus at Wildseed Farms. Share the wonder and awe of their amazing life cycle from tiny eggs, to caterpillars, to chrysalises and then into graceful adults. Call 800-848-0078 for more information.

Saturday, Ongoing, 9 am. Lawn and Garden Show, KWED Radio 1580 AM. Call the Show and get your gardening question answered on the air: 830-372-1580 or 1-800-361-1580.

Open Year-Round, Wednesday and Saturday, 9 am - 1 pm. Boggy Creek Farm. For more information, go to <http://www.boggycreekfarm.com/>

August CE Opportunities

Saturday, August 1, 9 – 10 am. “Hummingbirds: Myths & Facts.” Presented by Mark Klym of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Learn how to attract these jewels to your yard, using plants and feeders. Find out things that you never knew before about hummingbirds and their habits. Discover what it takes to create a beautiful fall hummingbird garden that doubles as a butterfly garden, too! Mark Klym is the Coordinator of the Texas Hummingbird Roundup, and coauthor of *Hummingbirds of Texas*. The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Cave Road Austin, Texas. Classes are held outdoors, so please dress for the weather. Arrive early for best seating. Seating is limited – you are welcome to bring your own chair. **1 CE**

Saturday, August 1, 9 – 11 am. Proper Pruning of Trees. Speaker Susan Campbell, Ed Coordinator, Medina River Natural Area. Voelcker Park, 12000 NW Military Hwy, San Antonio, TX at Temporary Parking Lot. For information call 210-624-2575. **2 CE**

Friday, August 7 & Saturday, August 15, 10 – 11 am. Watersaver Walk. Information about planning, planting and maintaining low water use landscape year-round. San Antonio Botanical Garden Guides, 555 Funston. Free with admission to SABOT. For information call: 210-207-3261. **1 CE**

Saturday, August 8, 9 – 10 am. “Introduction to Water Gardening.” Presented by Chris Cole, owner of Enviroescape. He specializes in the creation of naturally styled and organically managed ponds, waterfalls, and streams and knows the many personal and ecological benefits, address myths and misconceptions, answer your questions, and show you a variety of systems and design options to suit virtually any lifestyle, space, or budget. The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Cave Road Austin, Texas. Classes are held outdoors, so please dress for the weather. Arrive early for best seating. Seating is limited – you are welcome to bring your own chair. **1 CE**

Saturday, August 8, 9 am – noon. Rainwater Catchment Seminar presented by John Kight, engineer and rainwater catchment owner. Learn about design and materials from someone who has done it himself. Meet at Cibolo Nature Center parking lot and caravan to Kight installation. Seating is limited. \$20 members/\$30 non-members of the Center. 140 City Park Rd., Boerne, TX. Call 830-249-4616 to register. **3 CE**

Saturday, August 15, 9 – 10 am. “Organic Vegetable Gardening 101.” Presented by S. K. Rosina Newton, Horticulturist at The Natural Gardener. Beginning gardeners – or longtime gardeners from other regions of the country – often ask for this class. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn hands-on how to create successful vegetable, herb and flower gardens in Central Texas. Learn site selection, soil preparation and fertilization, planting methods, pest control, and more! The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Cave Road, Austin, Texas. Classes are held outdoors, so please dress for the weather. Arrive early for best seating. Seating is limited – you are welcome to bring your own chair. **1 CE**

Saturday, August 15, 10 – 11 am. “Organic Vegetable Gardening Seminar” with Steve Splaten at Schultz Nursery in Marion. Come and get some tips on helping your organic vegetable garden to thrive. Organically grown coffee and pastries will be served. **1 CE**

Monday, August 17, noon – 3 pm. “Essentials of Gardening: Session 1: Identifying Plant Diseases & Session 2: Can our Lawns be Saved?” GVST Essentials Class Series. San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels Ave., San Antonio. Each class covers 2 topics that coincide with the GVST's Almanac of Gardening presented by leading South Texas horticulture experts. Each class will focus on a gardening topic of the month. The classes are fun and interactive. Bring your hand-pruning tools and have them sharpened by Dr. Phix-It for an additional \$2 donation per tool. Bring your brown bag lunch; light refreshments served \$5 donation. Call 210-251-8101 or e-mail info@GardeningVolunteers.org for more information. **3 CE**

Saturday, August 22, 1 – 3 pm, “Growing a Fall Vegetable Garden.” Earth-Kind® Landscape Series. Come visit with David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist with Texas AgriLife Extension Service. This fall he presents a series of seasonal horticulture topics. San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston, Fee: \$20 per session. To register, contact Sasha Kodet at sasha.kodet@sanantonio.gov or 210-207-3270. **2 CE**

ON-LINE CEU OFFERINGS:

Ohio State University Plant Pathology Training Course. It is labeled "New Non-Credit Course: Sick Plants in a Hungry World." What is this course? It is a ten module (not highly technical) information course you take at your own pace, within a ten-week time limit after starting, at a cost of \$35. Time spent on your computer taking the modules, reading the supplied reading assignments, and taking the self-tests, can count as Master Gardener Advanced Training hours. To learn more about the class, go to: Online Plant Pathology Training Course Info. To register for the class, visit: Online Plant Pathology Training Course Registration. **CE based on completion of course.**

TAMU AgriLife Extension’s Earth Kind program has on-line curriculum presenting core information on environmental stewardship with 12 on-line training modules. Progress is tracked automatically, and results are forwarded to the MG Coordinator. Go to <http://earthkind.tamu.edu/MGtraining.html>. **CE based on class hours, unless otherwise specified by course.**

Horticulture Gardening Institute at Michigan State University in partnership with **Learn 2Grow**. Fees range from \$19.99 to \$29.99 per course. On-line courses of the titles range from specialty topics and general gardening how-to’s. Go to <http://www.gardeninginstitute.com>. **CE credit based on proof of completion of course.**

National Gardening Association's horticulturists created the Learning Garden, a series of online courses on plants and gardening for every gardener. The course fees range from \$14.95 (for Perennials, Vegetables & Annual Flowers) to \$35 (for Botany I, Botany II.). Go to <http://store.yahoo.com/nga-gardenshop/lg.html> CE based on credit earned.

Cornell University, Department of Horticulture, offers Organic Gardening, an on-line 8-week course. The course covers one topic during each of the 8 weeks. With a strong foundation in soil health and its impact on plant health, students then explore tried-and-true and cutting-edge techniques for all different kinds of garden plants – annuals and perennials, food plants and ornamentals. Be prepared to spend 2-4 hours a week completing the course. Being an active participant in the discussion boards brings the subject to life, and enriches the learning for all. This course is aimed at those with some basic gardening experience. It includes a number of hands-on activities as well as a group discussion board, quizzes, and readings. Through on-line discussion students share their experiences and contribute to everyone's learning experience. Cost: \$300. The course is non-credit. Certificate of completion to all who participate and finish the course. <http://hort.cals.cornell.edu/cals/hort/teaching/distance-learning/organic-gardening.cfm> **CE based on completion of course.**

Irrigation Tutorials. Free. Tutorials provide information on sprinkler/drip irrigation design, installation, filters, pumping systems & scheduling. Go to <http://www.irrigationtutorials.com> **CE based on completion of course.**

University of Vermont, non-credit course, "**Herbaceous Garden Plants On-line,**" which covers common annual & perennial flowers of temperate climates and herbaceous garden plant groups (ornamental grasses, roses, aquatics, ferns, bulbs, & wildflowers). Self-paced and available for one year following receipt of access codes. Course fee: \$99; notes and CD: \$10. <http://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/hgpo/hgpo.htm> **.CE credit based on proof of completion of course.**

Virginia Tech. Annuals and Perennials. Diane Relf, Professor. The course is self-paced and is available for one year following registration. This lesson provides an introduction to annuals and perennials. Successful completion of the lesson requires no prior knowledge of the subject area. This course is a collection of resources categorized by annuals, bulbs, perennials, and monthly gardening tips. Upon completion of this lesson you should be able to:

- Understand the specific needs of annuals, perennials, and bulbs.
- Cultivate healthy gardens by properly sowing, handling and propagating of plants.
- Utilize each month of the year to foster attractive, blooming flowers.
- Creatively design flowerbeds using color, a variety of gardening techniques, and proper care for specific plant needs. <http://alumni.iddl.vt.edu/course.php?id=325>

\$25. 1 CE with proof of completion of course.

Dept of Horticulture at Cornell University offers on-line lectures, virtual field trips, discussion, & quizzes to engage you in history, botanical principles, & horticultural applications. <http://hosts.cce.cornell.edu/hortdl/> **CE based on completion of course**

Online Botany Module offered by Oregon State University Extension Service; excellent Basic Botany refresher. <http://irrigationtutorials.com/> Free Irrigation Tutorials provide information on sprinkler/drip irrigation design, installation, filters, pumping systems & scheduling. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/botany/> **CE based on completion of course**

Iowa State University offers an online, non-credit course Horticultural Series; see website for dates. <http://www.lifelearner.iastate.edu/learners/hortOnline.htm> **CE based on completion of course**

CMG Committee Reports

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee will have its monthly meeting on Wednesday, August 5, at 10 am.

HERITAGE ROSE GARDEN

The workdays for the rose garden are August 12 and 26. We'll be deadheading and weeding and fighting the armadillo, deer and spider mites. Contact Harriet Aristeguieta at 830-609-1311 or haintx@att.net.

KIDS IN BLOOM

KIB will hold its teacher training class Saturday, August 29, 9 am to noon. Please come or contact Nancy Pappas at azop@gvvc.com or 830-885-6016.

BUTTERFLY GARDENS AT THE BULVERDE/SPRING BRANCH LIBRARY

The workday for the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library Butterfly Garden is August 26, from 8 to 10 am. Contact Peggy Hamm at khamma@gvvc.com or 830-438-9023 if you would like to join this group.

NEW LIFE BUTTERFLY GARDENS

The Butterfly Garden workday will be August 17 at 9 am. For more information, contact Peggy Carmody at 830-226-5216 or carmody@gvvc.com or co-chair Lois Ricci at poepjr@aol.com or 830-899-5362.

COMAL COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS

The Fairgrounds committee will be meeting at 8 am on Thursday, August 20. Contact Aleta Meyer if you have any questions, at aleta_meyer@hotmail.com or 830-629-2929.

LINDHEIMER GARDENS

Lindheimer Gardens workday will be Tuesday, August 11 at 8:30 am. If it doesn't rain, there might be no garden to work in! So, do your rain dance! Park across from the Lindheimer Haus on Comal Street. Contact Germaine Tuff at 830-629-1127 or germainetuff@hotmail.com for details.

NEWSLETTER

Contact Editor Bonnie Leitch at 830-660-2335 or bleach@earthlink.net for information about contributing to the newsletter. If you have any information about other gardening activities that should be in the newsletter, contact Julie Siliven at rejh@gvvc.com or 830-885-2665.

HOSPICE NEW BRAUNFELS

There will be no August workday. If interested in working with Hospice, please contact Tom Carson at tom.carson@us.fujitsu.com (subject line "Community Services – Hospice") or 830-606-5890.

EXTENSION OFFICE GARDENS

The August workday for the Extension Garden is cancelled. If you have any questions, contact Sharon Deeny at dendeeny@msn.com or 830-935-4209, or Linda Hardwick at usnb@aol.com or 830-625-8311.

WEBSITE

Check the website on-line at the website <http://grovesite.com/mg/comal> for new "how to" videos.

Comal Gardener

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Deadline for submission is the 20th of the month preceding publication.

Comal Master Gardeners Association Bylaws

"Members must complete recertification once every year. Recertification will include 12 hours of training, 12 hours of approved volunteer work and attendance at a minimum of two general membership meetings." (Article III, Section 4)