



January 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)

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

Number 6

Class 12 Ready to Begin

The books have been ordered, and the handouts have been revised. The Mentor Handbooks are complete, and the class helpers will be putting together all the information for the 20 new students registered for Master Gardener Class 12. Twelve mentors are ready to work with the new members and will meet their mentees on February 4 at noon, during a luncheon scheduled an hour before the first class. Michael and Donna Welch are coordinators of the class and are hoping to have four or five more students before the first day.

The schedule is set and includes topics like “Organic Vegetable Gardening” by Malcolm Beck, “Landscape Trees: Planting and Pruning” by Dr. Tom Harris, “The EarthKind Environmental Stewardship Program” by Dr. Don Tuff, “Native Plants, Wild Flowers, and Wildscapes” by Kelley Bender of Texas Parks and Wildlife, “Propagation” by Richard and Nancy Wackerbarth, and many other gardening topics listed on the schedule on the Comal Master Gardener website, <http://grovesite.com/mg/comal>.

Class 12 will be the first class to use the new edition of the *Texas Master Gardener Handbook*. According to Dr. Doug Welsh, Professor and Extension Horticulturist, Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, “The revised edition of the handbook is significantly improved in content and design.” The Welches have revised all assignments and questions to fit the new text.

Class 12 will also be part of a new “Ask a Master Gardener” campaign to be advertised in local newspapers and radio. The students and their mentors will be partners the first time the Master Gardener students answer telephone and email inquiries to the Extension office. The students are required to complete twelve telephone/email hours, beginning March 1. “We are hoping that a little advertising will keep the telephones ringing and the emails coming so that students and Master Gardeners together can provide homeowners with a solution to their gardening problems,” says Donna Welch.

“We’re excited about the new text, the mentors, and especially the new students,” says Michael Welch. “We’re really looking forward to February 4!” Class sessions are also available to all Master Gardeners who may receive continuing education credit for each class. Dates and topics will be available in the newsletter, from month to month.

CMG January General Meeting

Tuesday, January 27 at 6 pm

Speaker: Natalie Pogue

Topic: *Junior Master Gardeners ... Growing Good Kids*

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•••Garden Posts•••

- The positions of Chairperson for the Herb Gardens and the Cactus Gardens at the Extension Office are still open. If interested, please contact Karen Scherrer at kascherrer@yahoo.com or 512-581-2542.
- The January Herb SIG will meet Monday January 12th, 2009 @ 10:00 am at the extension office. Marilyn Godwin, our own "Pine Sol Lady," will demonstrate house keeping with herbs. RSVP to Marty Hopmann @ chrishop@gvtc.com by Monday January 5, 2009. We will provide further details when members RSVP.
- Thanks to Darel Walser for donating some of his Red Yuccas and a non-prickly Prickly Pear to the cactus garden at the Extension Garden and replacing a large Agave that had to be removed.
- The Herb Affair will be held on May 9, 2009 at the Antique Rose Emporium. Mary Moses and Ray Elizondo have agreed to co-chair the event this year. They will begin having planning meetings in January to prepare for this exciting event. If you are interesting in helping this year, please notify Mary at marycm@satx.rr.com or 210-279-5748.
- Great News! President Karen Scherrer is home from the hospital, enjoying the holidays. Turns out she had double pneumonia but is recovering nicely.

Master Gardener Christmas Party

Sweet sounds of Christmas carols greeted everyone as they arrived at the annual Comal Master Gardener Christmas party, December 12, at Forke Store. Janet Sweet played the favorite songs of the season on the piano. Members truly enjoyed her music! Lively conversation, wonderful turkey, side dishes and desserts prepared by members, and a sing-along all made for a wonderful evening.

Cliff Moses, Mary Moses' husband, played Christmas music and some Irish tunes on the hammered dulcimer as CMGs filed through the food line. Beautiful table decorations added to the festive atmosphere. Some lucky prizewinners received poinsettias to take home. Other prizes included an Irish Music CD from Cliff, a Master Gardener Ornament and two stained glass pieces by James Mosier. After singing "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," the party was over, but cheer followed everyone home. Thanks to all who made this party a huge success!

Happy New Year 2009
from the
Comal Master Gardener
Newsletter Staff

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 Chairpersons should submit all volunteer hours to Richard Wackerbarth, gardener@dataplex.net

January Gardening Opportunities

Ongoing, Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. Mitchell Lake Audubon Center. 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. Weekdays possibly open if you call 210-628-1639. For more information go to www.mitchelllakeaudubon.org

Ongoing, 9:30 am – 6:00 pm. Butterfly Haus at Wildseed Farms, Fredericksburg. Open 7 days a week. Call 800-848-0078 for more information.

Saturdays, Ongoing, 9:05 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.

Ongoing through June 2009. Art in the Garden. Icelandic sculptor Steinunn Thóraninsdóttir's cast iron and glass sculptures, "Horizons," is on display at the Garden. Susan Budge's exhibit, "Myths and Mysteries," remains on display. Free with admission to the Garden. San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston, San Antonio. 210-829-5100.

Ongoing, Wednesday and Saturday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Boggy Creek Farm. Open Year-Round. Go to <http://www.boggycreekfarm.com/> for more information.

January CE Opportunities

Month of January. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave., Austin. 512-232-0100 or <http://www.wildflower.org/events/> Free Admission. **CE based on honor system**

Monday-Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. The Earthkind Demonstration Garden. Sponsored by the Travis County AgriLife Extension Service, 1600-B Smith Rd, Austin, 512-854-9600. Pick up a brochure of plant names for self-guided tour or, if available, a MG will give a personalized tour. One block west of Hwy 183, two blocks north of Bolm Road near Austin-Bergstrom Airport. Free. **1 CE**

Friday, January 2, 10:00 am -11:00 am. Watersaver Walk. Information on planting and maintaining low water use in year-round landscaping. San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Ave., San Antonio. 210-207-3261. Free with admission. **1 CE**

Saturday, January 3, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm. Guided Hike to the Protected Habitat. Members of the Government Canyon SNA Trail Patrol will lead a hike to the Protected Habitat. For reservations and information, e-mail reservations@friendsofgc.org. Include name, age if under 18, e-mail address and telephone number for each reservation. 210-688-9055, ext. 291. Free, Reservations required. **7.5 CE**

Wednesday, January 7, 9 am- 12:30 pm. "Turf Grasses." Presenter Dr. David Chalmers. Hays County Master Gardeners Training Class. Hays County Extension Office, located at 1253 Civic Center Loop in San Marcos. RSVP and more information at 512-393-2120. **1 CE for each hour of lecture.**

Wednesday, January 7, 9:30 am – Noon (Program at 10:30) "Life as Cactophiles & Succulentists, How One Couple Integrated Water-storing Plants into Their Landscape." Presenters Richard and Carol Blocker. San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels, San Antonio. Donation welcome. Call 210-824-9981 or <http://www.sanantoniogardencenter.org/> **1.5 CE**

Saturday, January 10, 10 am – Noon or 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. "Gardeners and Global Warming." A class on the impacts of global warming and how to take actions to limit those impacts. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave., Austin. 512-232-0100 or <http://www.wildflower.org/events/> Free. **2 CE**

January 10, 17, 24 (3 Parts), 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Wildlife Tax Valuation Seminar. Cibolo Nature Center. See <http://www.cibolo.org/calendar> for full description of classes. Call 830-249-4616 for more information. **12 CE based on completion of entire course**

Monday, January 12, 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm. Panel discussion on “Winter Rose Care or What to do in Your Rose Garden During the Winter Months.” Panelists Jackie Clark, David Koch and Meg Ware. Social following. San Antonio Rose Society meeting. San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels, San Antonio. Free. For more information, call Ed Bradley at 210-658-8074. **1 CE**

Tuesday, January 13, 6:30 pm -8:30 pm. Plant exchange and “getting to know you” followed by program at 7:00 pm. Guadalupe County Chapter, Native Plant Society of Texas, Guad. Co. Annex, 1101 Elbel Rd., Schertz. For more information, contact Randee Malmsten at guadalupecounty@npsot.org **1 CE or length of program**

Saturday, January 17, 9:00 am – Noon. “Fruit Tree Pruning Seminar.” Presenter Dr. Larry Stein. Fanick’s Garden Center, 1025 Holmgreen Rd., San Antonio. Free. Contact 210-648-1303. **3 CE**

Saturday, January 17, 8:30 am. Explore the Canyon. Interested in the flora, fauna, natural and cultural history of Government Canyon? Willing to court a little mystery? This walk may be for you. Open to all ages; group size limited to the first 10 people. Dress appropriately and wear sturdy hiking shoes; bring water and a snack. Meet at the Visitor’s Center by the rainwater-harvesting tower. No pets. Subject to cancellation. Free. For more information, call 210-688-9055. Ext 292. **CE based on hike.**

Sunday, January 18, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. “Organic Gardening.” Presenter Nick Vann owner of Nematode Nick’s Landscaping. San Antonio Daylily Society, San Antonio Botanical Gardens, 555 Funston Ave., Ed. Bldg., San Antonio. Free. **2 CE**

Tuesday, January 20, 7:00 pm. “Fire Safety in the Hill Country.” Presenter Jan Fulkerson, Texas Forestry. Native Plant Society, Lindheimer Chapter, GVTC Auditorium, 36101 FM 3159, Smithson Valley. Contact Jean Philips 830-964-4024. Free. **1 CE**

Wednesday, January 21, 9 am- 12:30 pm. “Native and Adapted Plants.” Hays County Master Gardeners Training Class. Hays County Extension Office, located at 1253 Civic Center Loop in San Marcos. The course completion date will be May 20, 2009. RSVP and more information at 512-393-2120. **1 CE for each hour of lecture.**

Saturday, January 24, 9:00 am -5:00 pm. Tree Talk Winter Walk. Explore the beauty and benefits of native trees and shrubs. Get tips on landscape design and tree maintenance and learn about individual tree and shrub species with walks and talks led by staff and local tree experts. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave., Austin. Free. 512-232-0100 or <http://www.wildflower.org/events/> **CE based on the individual walk**

Monday, January 26, 7:00 pm. Organic Living Club. “Detoxifying the Body.” Presenter Michael of Michael’s Products. For Goodness Sake, 1306 Common Street, New Braunfels. There are no dues and everyone is welcome. Call Susan Hall at 830-626-1963. RSVP, seating is limited. **1 CE or length of lecture**

Tuesday, January 27, 6:30-8:30 pm. “ABCs of Gardening Here; It Ain’t Like It Was Back Home.” O’Connor High School, 12222 Leslie Road, San Antonio. \$15. To register for the class, call 210-397-8100 or www.nisd.net/ace **2 CE**

Wednesday, January 28, 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. “Botany.” Presenter Flo Oxley. Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Training Class. Schertz Civic Center, Bldg 5, 1400 Schertz Parkway, Schertz. Please RSVP to George Ammermann at 830-372-4690 or email gammermann@gvec.net **1 CE for each hour of lecture**

ON-LINE CONTINUING EDUCATIONAL UNIVERSITY OFFERINGS:

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. Four on-line courses at this time are Getting Green, Creative Containers, Amazing Annuals and Better Bulbs. Fees range from \$19.99 to \$29.99 per course. Go to <http://www.gardeninginstitute.com>. CE credit based on proof of completion of course.

Irrigation Tutorials. Tutorials provide information on sprinkler/drip irrigation design, installation, filters, pumping systems and scheduling. Go to <http://www.irrigationtutorials.com> Free. **CE credit will be given with proof of completion.**

University of Vermont, non-credit course, Herbaceous Garden Plants Online, which covers common annual and perennial flowers of temperate climates and herbaceous garden plant groups (ornamental grasses, roses, aquatics, ferns, bulbs and wildflowers).

Self-paced and available for one year following receipt of access codes. Course fee: \$99; notes 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. \$25 (or free to VT alumni). 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. **1 CE with proof of completion of course.**

Upon completion of this lesson you should:

- Understand the specific needs of annuals, perennials and bulbs.
- Cultivate healthy gardens by properly sowing, handling and propagating plants.
- Utilize each month of the year to foster attractive, blooming flowers.
- Creatively design flower beds using color, a variety of gardening techniques, and proper care for specific plant needs. <http://alumni.iddl.vt.edu/course.php?id=DHORK001>.

Oregon State University Extension Service. Basic Botany refresher. The content of this module is based on the Basic Botany chapter in the Master Gardener Handbook. This online module is being used for Web-based delivery of instruction in conjunction with the annual Master Gardener training program. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/botany/>. Self-study. **No CE.**

CMG Committee Reports

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee will have its monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 7, at 10:00 am.

BUTTERFLY GARDENS AT THE BULVERDE/SPRING BRANCH LIBRARY

The design committee for the Butterfly Gardens at the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library will meet on Tuesday, January 13, at 10:30 am at the library. If you are interested in joining this design committee, please contact Peggy Hamm at 830-438-9023 or khamma@gvtc.com.

LINDHEIMER GARDENS

There will be no January workday.

SCHOOL GARDENS

If you would like to help or to sign up to be a liaison for one of the school gardens, please contact Nancy Pappas at 830-885-6016 or azop@gvtc.com.

NEWSLETTER

Contact Editor Bonnie Leitch at 830-660-2335 or bleitch@earthlink.net for information about contributing to the newsletter. If you have any information about other gardening activities that should be in the newsletter, please contact Mary Salmon at 830-627-8174 or ldylatuna@satx.rr.com

HOSPICE NEW BRAUNFELS

Hope Hospice gardens welcome any member who would like to put in a few hours of effort once, or on a continuing basis. If interested, please contact Tom Carson at 830-606-5890 or tom.carson@us.fujitsu.com. When sending to this email address, please include the following comment in the subject line "Community Services – Hospice"

NEW LIFE BUTTERFLY GARDENS

Workday this month will be third Monday of the month, January 19, at 9:00 am. We will be doing the usual weeding, watering and praying for rain. The gardens are located on Scarborough, accessed from the Dam Access Rd. out of Sattler. For more information, contact Peggy Carmody at 830-226-5216 or carmody@gvtc.com or co-chair Lois Ricci at 830-899-5352 or poepjr@aol.com

HERITAGE ROSE GARDEN

We only meet the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month, January 14 and 28, at 9:00 am. We will be performing regular weeding and deadheading. For more info, contact Harriet Aristeguieta at 830-609-1311 or haintx@nbt.com. Harriet would like some company in this endeavor. Just a reminder, anyone desiring to work on a non-scheduled workday should contact Harriet first for proper pruning techniques.

COMAL COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS

The Fairgrounds Committee will meet on January 15, third Thursday of the month, at 9:00 am. We'll be doing our heavy winter pruning, so bring your clippers, loppers and something to haul clippings in. We'll bring the snacks! If you have any questions about the schedule, call Aleta at (830) 629-2929 or email aleta_meyer@hotmail.com

EXTENSION OFFICE GARDENS

The Extension Garden workgroup will not be meeting in January. If you have any questions, you can contact Sharon Deeny at (830) 935-4209 or dendeeny@msn.com, or Linda Hardwick at 830-625-8311 or usnb@aol.com.

WEBSITE

Five forms that you might need are on-line at the website <http://grovesite.com/mg/comal> under CMG Forms. The class application form is under CMG Class Training. All forms are interactive and can be filled out on-line.

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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)