



November 2010

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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Number 5

TMG Program Implements Background Checks

In accordance with the Texas Master Gardener Program, County Master Gardener programs will conduct background checks on all Master Gardener volunteers, interns and trainees. Accordingly, starting in January 2011, all Comal Master Gardeners will be required to provide a background check. The state program further stipulates that background checks or screening should be conducted every three years for each Master Gardener.

A&M Extension's Youth Protection Standards (YPS) program will be used to conduct the background checks. YPS application forms will be available at the CMG general meetings or the Extension Office. Members are asked to pay the \$10 required for the background check and screening. It should be noted that the YPS program does not request or receive credit reports as part of the background check or screening. YPS receives only criminal background information.

Information required to perform the background screening includes the following: complete name, address, date of birth, gender, first 5 digits of the applicant's SSN and signature. Race or ethnicity is optional.

According to guidance from the Texas Master Gardener Program: "Prior criminal background checks are acceptable by YPS with documented verification from any one of the following sources: school districts, churches, recognized youth groups or associations, law enforcement, Texas Youth Commission, Department of Defense--Child and Youth Services and/or Family Program, concealed handgun license; and/or licensed day care workers." These background checks must be dated within the past three years.

A current criminal background check can be stapled to the YPS form and submitted to satisfy this requirement. For example, should one have a current concealed handgun license, copying both sides of the card and stapling the copies to an YPS form submitted to the Extension Office will satisfy this requirement.

The membership will be kept advised on further implementation information, as the CMG Executive Board works to comply with the state program requirements. Comal Master Gardeners having questions about this new requirement can contact CMG President Larry Williamson (email: llwilliamson@gvvc.com or phone: 830-899-2928).

CMG November Meeting
Silent Auction and Plant Exchange
6 pm Tuesday, November 16
Place: *St. Joseph Center at Sts. Peter and Paul*

Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service, or accommodation in order to participate in meetings are encouraged to contact the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, 830-620-3440 for assistance. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products or trade names do not intend discrimination or imply endorsement by the Extension Service. Extension forbids employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, or national origin in any term, condition, or privilege of employment.

•••Garden Posts•••

- Information about the November meeting: Everyone is encouraged to bring at least one interesting or saleable item for the silent auction. You may drop items at Saint Joseph Center from 4:30 on, or you may give your item to any board member before the meeting. If you want to participate in the plant exchange, bring your plant with a label identifying the botanical name and, if possible, a description of the plant, giving planting and care information.

To reach the meeting, if you are coming from Landa Street, turn right into the parking lot beside the thrift store immediately after the curve when Landa becomes Seguin. The address is 315 North Seguin. Saint Joseph Center Meeting Room is inside the building facing the parking lot. If you are coming from the direction of I-35, turn left into the parking lot immediately after the thrift store.

- December 13 the Herb SIG will be having its Christmas party. Festivities will start at 11 am. There will not be a presentation. It will be a potluck event at a place TBD. Please join us for some Christmas cheer, gift exchange and planning for next year. Contact Sally Ann at mustang_sally6@msn.com or 830-980-5645.
- From Treasurer Marlene Ballard: For October: Income, \$177.25. Expenses, \$339.92. Balance as of October 26th, \$9879.95.
- The hostesses for the November meeting are Karen Scherrer, Evelyn Nielson, Michelle Gray, Pat Williford and Rosalie Meier.
- Congratulations and welcome to Susan Gillett, Lucy Guerra and Laura Scribner Paulson, newly certified Comal Master Gardeners. That brings the total number certified from this year's class to 19. Way to go, Class of 2010!
- Comal Master Gardeners are selling poinsettia plants for \$10 each. Order by November 10 for delivery the first week in December. Colors available are red, white, pink and "jingle bell," red with pink speckles. To order poinsettias or to get more information, contact Lucy Guerra (830-237-9637 or loudog5074@yahoo.com). In your request, indicate the number and color(s) you wish to purchase. Members are encouraged to buy plants for themselves and to sell to others. A CMG member will contact you to confirm your order. Money for the poinsettias is due on or before December 10.
- Do you know a friend who would be perfect for Comal Master Gardeners? The 2011 class will be held every Wednesday from 1:30 to 5 pm, beginning January 19 and ending May 11. Application deadline is December 15, 2010. The cost of the class is \$150.00. The details and an application are on line at <http://mastergardener.comal.tx.us> Applications are also available at the Extension Office.
- Comal Master Gardeners just might need YOU! We are still in need of an Educational Enrichment Coordinator. It might seem daunting to follow Pat Williford, but she will tell you that she felt the same way when she took over the job from Germaine Tuff. Being Educational Enrichment Coordinator is a vital service to every member of our organization and one of our major outreach projects to the greater Comal County community. Talk to Pat if you are interested and have any questions. She will be happy to help you take over this most important work.

Report your CE and Volunteer Hours!

Send your CE hours to Don Tuff. Send to **CERecorder@MasterGardener.Comal.TX.US** Be sure to include title of talk, speaker's name, date and time of talk, location, CE hours and sponsoring organization.

Chairs, send volunteer hours to Becky Pinkerton, **CMGtime@gmail.com**

Lest We Forget

The Bulverde/Spring Branch Library Butterfly Garden

by Lu Allen, Peggy Hamm and Mary T Salmón

Bulverde/Spring Branch Library Butterfly Garden, by Peggy Hamm, chair

During the years of planning for the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library building, the Friends of the Library dreamed of having a butterfly garden. Because I am a Friend of the Library, as well as a Master Gardener, we visited numerous butterfly gardens around the Hill Country, including the New Life Butterfly Garden, for ideas and advice. In 2009, just months after moving into the new library building, the garden became a reality.



The purposes of the garden are three-fold: first, to provide an educational venue for the children's programs at the library; second, to create a spot of beauty and interest for all library visitors; and third, to provide a link between community resources. There are a number of gardeners among the Friends, and they were the lead group for planning and funding the garden.

The Executive Council of the Comal Master Gardeners, recognizing the lack of sponsored projects in the county outside of the city of New Braunfels, agreed to grant volunteer hours for work on this project but did not assign a project chairman. The Friends of the Library retained the leadership role. Lee Franzel, Rich Bradley and I, as members of both organizations, facilitated the partnership between the Friends and the Master Gardeners.

The Bulverde Garden Club and the River Crossing Garden Club joined us to help develop the garden. A local Girl Scout troop also contributed some support. The community aspect of the garden has contributed to stronger relationships and an increased awareness of and respect for various Spring Branch and Bulverde groups. All groups were included in the initial planning stages, with members of the Comal Master Gardeners as the primary advisors in the design of the garden. The most significant decision was to determine which butterflies to attract and which hosts and nectar sources to plant, specific to the chosen species' needs. We were also advised to plant native plants directly into native soil and to keep bed sizes small enough so that gardeners could reach into them, rather than having to step in them. The design stage began in January 2009, garden preparation began in February of that year, and planting was started in March.

The Friends are responsible for funding the project. The organization requested donations of plants from library patrons and from the volunteers working the project for the initial plantings. Plant donations have continued and a local nursery, Southwest Growers, has provided some plants at a greatly reduced prices. The Friends were awarded a grant from the Lower Colorado River Authority through Pedernales Electric to install a drip irrigation system, a picnic table, a masonry bridge in a walkway accessing the garden from the library and signage. Contributions from library patrons dedicated specifically to the Butterfly Garden provide a small, but continuing pool of funds for gardening supplies and educational materials.

The library now has a brochure listing the plants in the garden as an example of what plants might be used for home butterfly gardens. This brochure is distributed at the library and at gardening programs. A pictorial display created by Charlotte Trussel hangs in the library for use in identification of specific plants

and of specific butterflies. Labeling all plants in the garden is an on-going project. New label stakes will be installed this winter. Linda Valdez has compiled a scrapbook detailing the activities of the first year of the garden. Continuing documentation of the project includes photos taken during workdays and at random times.

Two Master Gardeners who participate in the on-going care and expansion of the Butterfly Garden, Lee Franzel and Linda Valdez, planned and led educational programs about butterflies and butterfly gardens for young children as part of the Library Summer Reading Program in 2009. Master Gardeners Marlene Skaggs and Nancy Pappas provided gardening programs during the 2010 Summer Reading Program. A member of the Bulverde Garden Club, Donna Vickers, organized and taught a class for young children about butterflies in the summers of 2009 and 2010. Donna plans to teach the class again in the summer of 2011.

Adult gardening programs have been and continue to be offered by Master Gardeners at the library as spinoffs of the Butterfly Garden. Lee Franzel and Rich Bradley are chairing these programs with assistance from me. We are currently offering gardening programs for adults monthly.

Library patrons enjoy the garden as a place for a quiet stroll or a place to read and have a picnic lunch. A growing number of children routinely make the garden their first stop on trips to the library. Library staff members have developed an increased interest in gardening because of the number of questions from library patrons about the Butterfly Garden and the specific plants on display.

We have met the requirements to be recognized as a North American Butterfly Association garden. A plaque from the national organization resides in the garden, and it raises questions from patrons about how to learn more about butterflies.

I feel that this is a very successful project and is extremely rewarding for those of us who have spent numerous hours developing and maintaining it. We thank all those Master Gardeners who have helped us along the way, and we look forward to sharing many more years of gardening and appreciating the beauty of butterflies.

Interview with Lee Franzel on the Development of the New Butterfly Gardens

Lee was in the Comal Master Gardener class of 2009. That year the planning and construction of the butterfly garden was an approved project for volunteer hour requirements for certification. Lee was especially interested in the project because he lived just a few miles from the library.

From the beginning the Friends of the Bulverde/Spring Branch Library wanted a butterfly garden. They had two goals: to provide an educational venue for the children's program at the library and to create a spot of beauty and interest for all library visitors. Some of the Friends happened to be gardeners, and they were the leading group to plan and establish the garden. They are also responsible for the on-going upkeep of the garden.

Although the project was ambitious, there was lots of support. Once people heard about the proposed garden, those who love gardens volunteered. The Bulverde Garden Club and the River Crossing Garden Club joined the Friends in developing the garden. Even a local Girl Scout troop indicated that they wanted to help. Another plus was that the Executive Board of the Comal Master Gardeners agreed to grant volunteer hours for work on the project.



The library is built on a hilltop, a perfect spot for a butterfly garden. But heavy equipment had scraped the surface, removing any topsoil during the construction of the library. What is typical after construction is to

put a layer of two to three inches of topsoil over the solid caliche and limestone. Then some kind of turf seed is usually thrown out. So the garden developers had to deal with a thick growth of Bermuda grass. With the help of volunteers they tackled the Bermuda grass problem. Although the sunny, windy hilltop site was perfect for the butterfly garden, volunteers needed to plant tall bushy, background plants to the southeast as a windbreak. The bushes not only screened some of the commercial signs that sullied the view, but they also maintained the fabulous vistas of the Hill Country to the east.

The Spring Branch and Bulverde community donated plants, as did Comal Master Gardeners and other volunteers. The plant selection was mainly native, which shows how an interesting and attractive landscape can be made with earth-friendly plants -- without using invasives or high-water-consumption plants. The planners chose plants ideally suited to the Hill Country like blackfoot daisy, Aesclepias, Jerusalem artichoke, monarda, and an array of salvias like 'Lollie Jackson,' 'La Trinidad' and 'Big Red.' Lee is particularly proud that the plants he propagated and donated are now mature specimens: purple coneflower, red yucca, passionflower and his favorite butterfly plant, blue mistflower.

During the first year the new plants had to compete with deer. The gardeners learned that the decision to use mostly native plants fared pretty well against the deer pressure that year. At that time there was no fencing around the library, which created a real learning experience about which plants were deer resistant. As everyone knows, our area has a substantial deer population. To exacerbate the problem, the summer of 2009 was the driest since the early 1950s. As a result, deer ate plants they would normally ignore.

To irrigate the garden that first year, which was also the big drought summer, volunteers pulled a long hose from existing library faucets. Now there is a fence around the library and a drip irrigation system.

To control weeds, the CMGs used their experience from other projects, like New Life. They spread thick layers of newspapers over the ground, wet them and covered that with recycled mulch from the county. The plants were inserted through this grass/weed barrier. The group gathered large rocks from around the site to line the pathways. Decomposed granite gravel paths proved both practical and attractive. The gardeners also cut and erected a large tepee frame of cedar poles for a display of *Passiflora incarnate*, which now is completely covered with vines, large purple blooms and, of course, Gulf fritillary butterflies.

Of all his experiences with the garden, Lee feels that Peggy Hamm's leadership has served as an ideal model for what a volunteer coordinator should be. Every volunteer participated in all decisions, and each has been recognized for their contribution. Peggy applied for and the group received a plaque from the North American Butterfly Association. The garden is scheduled to be featured on the *Central Texas Gardener* TV show. Lee looks with pride at what the group has accomplished. His pride has inspired him to become an enthusiastically active member of CMG. As Lee claims, "If our members latch onto one of our projects and make it his/her own, our organization thrives!"

Lee feels that the butterfly garden is not only an educational tool for the children's programs at the library but also an area of beauty and interest for all library visitors. Library patrons can stroll around and see plant specimens identified with a nametag and discover what grows best in this area. Because of the garden, the library has expanded the sharing of plant knowledge further than it could from a book or computer screen. Nothing is better than that! MTS

Interview with Charlotte Trussel, Volunteer Extraordinaire in Friends of the Library

The Bulverde/Spring Branch Library Butterfly Garden has transformed a barren patch of land into a color-filled area teeming with butterflies. The plants were chosen with an emphasis on providing larval food, shelter or a source of nectar. A variety of plants with successive bloom times assures that nourishment is provided for each season and each species of butterfly.

Many Texas native plants were used, and a brochure is available listing both common and scientific names. The brochure also gives information about which butterfly is associated with each plant. Inside the

library are posters with labeled photos of the plants and the butterflies for easy identification. The addition of a bench and picnic table makes the area a popular spot for library patrons to sit and enjoy the view.

For Charlotte, the garden has provided an opportunity to meet and work with a wonderful group of volunteers. It has also been a real learning experience because it has encouraged her to do extensive research on butterfly migration and the instars in their life cycles. A newly-hatched insect is called a first-instar or larva. An adult is a final instar. Most caterpillars, or butterflies and moth larvae, have five or six instars. The garden is the perfect place to take photographs, which she enjoys.

Charlotte feels that many dedicated workers deserve credit for the donation of plants, time, and the effort of planting, mulching, weeding and watering. She believes every volunteer has been enriched by the opportunity the garden provides to learn and serve. As Charlotte says, "While there is still much to be done, we all understand gardening is not a destination but a journey. I feel lucky to be a small part of that experience." LA

More About the Herb SIG

The Comal Master Gardeners' Herb Special Interest Group (SIG) meets the second Monday of every month from 10 am until about noon. It is open to anyone who is interested in learning about herbs. Members are encouraged to bring a sack lunch and enjoy the group after the presentation. Drinks are provided. There is usually a nominal fee charged for supplies. The SIG requires a reservation by RSVP to Sally Ann Hnatiuk because the presenter and host must know how many to prepare for. Sally Ann will send an email to all who reply positively to let them know where the meeting will take place, if any purchase is required and how much will be charged for the meeting. If you should have any questions, call Sally Ann Hnatiuk (mustang_sally6@msn.com or 830-980-5645).

November Gardening To-Do List

by Juleen Randall

I am sad that 2010 is almost over. The temperatures and rainfall this year have really made my yard gorgeous! Fall asters and Clara Curtis heirloom mums have made such a showing that I have to stand and admire them for just a few minutes on my way to work. I love it when your landscape plants do exactly what you asked of them! Dare we ask that 2011 spoil us again with the same weather, but without the high humidity, of course?

I have chosen to let my vegetable garden, and myself, rest this fall. If you have the itch, however, early November is the time for mustards, radishes, and spinach seeds. Cilantro, dill, fennel and parsley look so much better this time of year, so plant several plants now to be collected and saved for those hotter months when all they want to do is bolt.

Plant your bulbs after Thanksgiving, but your trees, shrubs and perennials all month long. This is the last month to sow your wildflower seeds and a good month to plant pansies, violas, ornamental kale and cabbage, snapdragons, sweet alyssum and stock. The smell of stock makes me nostalgic for my grandmother's garden. Weeding with "Gramma" was one of my favorite things to do when I was little.



Remember our average first freeze is between the 15th and the 25th of this month, so here are a few homemade solutions for protection:

Cloches – Cut the bottom out of a gallon milk carton. Set this over your seedlings to protect from frost. When the temperature warms during the day, remove the cap or the entire carton, so your plant doesn't suffer from the heat.

Hoops – Place rebar or strong sticks in the ground, about every three feet on either side of your vegetable rows. Fit ½" to ¾" PVC onto the rebar, creating hoops that can be covered with sheets, tarps or material manufactured specifically for plant protection.

Cold Frames – Use one-by-twos to make the framework for the four walls. One wall should be taller than its opposite wall, making an angled roof. Cut and staple 6 mil clear plastic to the frame to make the walls, then make the frame and plastic for a separate roof. The structure can easily be placed over tender plants, and the roof removed when the freeze ends.

Sheets and buckets – Many of my winter vegetables have been “tucked in” with Care Bear sheets and five gallon buckets.

With all of these solutions, the key is to prevent the covering from making contact with the leaves of the plant.

November 2010 Gardening Opportunities

Friday, November 5 thru Saturday, November 20. 10 am -11:00 am. “Native Plant Walks.” Explore the San Antonio Botanical Garden's 11-acre Texas Native Trail with a Master Naturalist. Stroll along its Hill Country Trail in search of Texas snowbells, mountain laurel and other plants adapted to the rocky, alkaline soils. On the shaded walk around the lake in its East Texas Pineywoods, observe acid-loving woodland species such as magnolia, sweetgum and sassafras. The South Texas Trail showcases dryland trees and shrubs such as mesquite, huisache, cenizo, ebony and sotol. Come take a walk across Texas! San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston.

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center. Explore the natural world just minutes from downtown San Antonio. 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. For information, call 210-628-1639 or email mlac@audubon.org

Butterfly Haus at Wildseed Farms, Fredericksburg. 9:30 am – 6 pm daily. Hundreds of native Texas butterflies inhabit the 3,000 square foot Butterfly Haus. Call 800-848-0078 for more information.

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

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

November 2010 CE Opportunities

Wednesdays beginning August 25 thru November 17, Noon - 4 pm. Fall 2010 Bexar County Master Gardener Classes, by top professionals. Here's your chance to master the Art of Gardening in the challenging South Central Texas climate. Palo Alto College, 1400 W. Villaret Blvd. The Performing Arts Building, Suite 101, San Antonio. To learn more call Angle Torres for information at 210-467-6575. **CE based on length & # of classes attended.**

Wednesday, November 3 thru Thursday, November 4, “Master Gardener Vegetable Specialist Training” by Barbara Storz, County Extension Agent-Horticulture. The MG Vegetable Specialist was created as an intensive multi-day, hands-on course to provide Master Gardeners with the knowledge and skills required to teach vegetable production. Completion of the course and other requirements results in recognition as a Master Gardener —Vegetable Specialist. Meeting Location: USDA-ARS, Bee Building, 2413 E. Highway 83, Weslaco. For more information contact Barbara Storz: 956/383-1026 or email b-storz@tamu.edu <http://hidalgo-tx.tamu.edu> Course fee \$250. **CE based on length of class.**

Friday, November 5, thru Sunday, November 7, 10 am - 4 pm. “Fall Festival of Roses.” The three-day event features presentations from national gardening experts. The Antique Rose Emporium. Contact: 210-651-4565, areroses@texasbb.com or 979-836-5548 for information. **CE based on length of class.**

Friday, November 5 & Saturday, November 20, 10 – 11 am. “Watersaver Walk.” Information about planning, planting and maintaining low water use landscape year-round. San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston. Free with admission to SABOT. For information, call 210-207-3261. **1 CE**

Saturday, November 6, 9 am - Noon. “Ethnobotany Workshop” by Patty Leslie-Pastzor. Take a walk along the Cibolo Nature Center (CNC) trails, a walking textbook of knowledge about uses of our native plants by Native Americans and early Texas settlers. This is an overlooked and most interesting part of Texas history and culture. Cost: CNC Members \$20/person; non-members \$25/person. Pre-registration required. Contact Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne: 830-249-4616 or nature@cibolo.org **3 CE**

Saturday, November 6, 9 - 10 am. “Tree Care for Central Texas” by Guy LeBlanc. Learn how to take care of these majestic plants so that they can provide decades of shade, beauty, and climate-moderating service to us and future generations. Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Cave Road Austin. For information: 512-288-6113. **1 CE**

Saturday, November 6, 9 am - Noon. “Rain Barrel Workshop: Innovative approach to capturing free water” by Lou Kellog, Mary Fernandez and Bryan Davis. S.A. Botanical Garden, 555 Funston. Fee: \$55. Contact Sasha Kodet at 210-207-3270 or sasha.kodet@sanantonio.gov **3 CE**

Thursday, November 11, 6:30 pm. “Designing an Herbal Landscape, by Diane Lewis. Refreshments begin at 6:30 pm and the program starts at 7. Diane will discuss history, design basics and planning, the landscape uses, selection, compatible hardscape and theme gardens. Get tips on how to create a designer look on a tight budget. The San Antonio Herb Society. San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels. **1 CE**

Thursday, November 11 & Friday, November 12, 10 am - Noon or 6 - 8 pm. “Fall Tree Planting Workshop.” Learn the most current tree planting techniques from the City’s Urban Forester. This information covers how to properly plant a tree for a healthy and productive life. After completion of the training, you are also eligible to participate in the preservation of our New Braunfels urban park forest by supervising one of our volunteer planting crews as a Crew Leader later this winter. Class includes the all new Arboretum Guide and a snack. Landa Haus, Landa Park Dr., New Braunfels. Cost is \$8. Contact: 830-221-4359. **2 CE**

Saturday, November 13, 9 - 10 am. “Native Landscape Maintenance 102” by Colleen Dieter. She will demonstrate what is necessary to do to keep the great Texas native landscapes looking their best. Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Cave Road Austin, 512-288-6113 **1 CE**

Saturday, November 13, 10 am - Noon. “Growing Culinary Herbs in Texas.” This Austin Master Gardener class will cover the basics of growing both seasonal and perennial culinary herbs in central Texas, and will offer some suggestions for their use. Class size is limited, so sign up early by calling the Austin Master Gardener Help Desk at 512-854-9600. American Botanical Council, 6200 Manor Rd., Austin. **2 CE**

Saturday, November 13, 9 am - Noon. "Rainwater Harvest Workshop" by John Kight, engineer and rainwater catchment owner. Gives the latest technological information and the most practical advice. Learn about design and materials from someone who has done it himself! Members of Cibolo Nature Center: \$25/person; non-members \$35/person. Limited to 30. Pre-registration required. Call 830-249-4616. Location: CNC Auditorium, Boerne and visit to Kight installation. **3 CE**

Wednesday, November 17, 3 - 4:30 pm. "Backyard Beekeeping--Is It For You?" by Gene Chollett, experienced Comal County beekeeper now specializing in swarm removal. Learn about beekeeping basics and about scientific and legal considerations for the hobbyist. New Braunfels Public Library, 700 E. Common. Q&A. Free. No pre-registration. For information, call 830-964-4494. **1.5 CE**

Thursday, November 18, 7 - 9 pm. "Bonsai Trees" by Tom and Nancy Krause. Guadalupe County Master Gardeners General Meeting, AgriLIFE Extension Bldg, 210 E. Live Oak, Seguin. Contact: Linda Bruno, 363-8380 or email jlbruno@gvec.net **2 CE**

Saturday, November 20, 11 am - Noon. "Native Plant Walk." Explore 11-acre Texas Native Trail with a "walk across Texas!" S.A. Botanical Garden, 555 Funston. For details: <http://www.sabot.org/?nd=adults> **1 CE**

Saturday, November 27, 10 am - 1 pm. "Savoring the Herbal Harvest" by Diane Lewis. Best way to harvest herbs for flavorful culinary creations. S.A. Botanical Garden, 555 Funston. \$41 fee + \$10 lunch. Register: 657-8866, or <http://www.communityed.neisd.net> **3 CE**

ON-LINE CEU OFFERINGS:

Tomato Growing 101 - New! Spring 2010 The best garden is a well planned garden, so while you wait for spring, get ready for the best tomato harvest by taking the new online course Tomato 101 - The Basics of Growing Tomatoes. This course teaches all aspects of growing tomatoes in a home garden, at your own pace and in your own home.

The course covers: Garden and soil preparation, Plant selection and training, Fertilization, Irrigation, Weed, disease and insect control, and General care. A short quiz at the end of each section lets you review what you learned before moving on, and at the completion of the course generates a certificate for you (one hour CEU credit). So, take a seat by your computer and dream about those summer tomatoes while you go through Tomato 101.

Available at: www-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/ Creating a free use account is required to participate.

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.**

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 base 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.**

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.**

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 & 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 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=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 BOARD

The Executive Board will have its monthly meeting on Wednesday, November 3 at 10 am.

EXTENSION OFFICE GARDENS

The AgriLife Extension Gardens will meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesday, the 2nd and the 16th at 8:30 am. We will use much of our time in planning for the area behind and to the side of the old meeting room. We will have access to the meeting room. One more load of mulch needs to be hauled in to finish the last oak tree island. If you wish to volunteer to work in the gardens and to obtain first hand emails about on going projects, contact Linda Valdez (ldvaldez@satx.rr.com) or co-chair Sally Ann Hnatiuk (mustang_sally6@msn.com).

NEW BRAUNFELS CONSERVATION PLAZA GARDENS

The Conservation Plaza Rose Garden workday will be Wednesday, November 10 at 9 am. We will have only one workday in November because of the Thanksgiving holiday. As always, bring a small bucket or container for your clippings and your pruners and gloves. Contact Germaine Tuff (830-629-1127 or germainetuff@hotmail.com) if you have questions.

KIDS IN BLOOM

Kids in Bloom is growing, with new schools coming on board and old favorites still planting. KIB would like to offer a training class for any Master Gardeners who are interested in learning more about the KIB curriculum, what being a mentor for a local area school entails, and other important information. If you have wanted to get involved in KIB but don't really understand what that means, this is your opportunity! Come get involved in sharing your love of gardening with the younger generation – and their teachers. Contact Nancy Pappas (azop@gvtc.com/ or 210-385-5981) to coordinate with a school near you.

BUTTERFLY GARDENS AT THE BULVERDE/SPRING BRANCH LIBRARY

We will not have a November workday. Our December workday will be on December 9 at 9 am instead of the usual 4th Thursday. We will resume our regular schedule in January 2011. Contact Peggy Hamm (khamma@gvtc.com) or Lee Franzel (leefranzel@gvtc.com) for more information.

NEW LIFE BUTTERFLY GARDEN

The Butterfly Garden workday is the third Monday, November 15 at 9 am. New Life Butterfly has been getting ready for the dedication of the new dormitory at the New Life Campus. The leaf cutter ants have been in waiting for us and are doing a good job of eating up a larger variety of plants than usual. Y'all come and we'll do battle. For more information, contact Peggy Carmody (830-226-5216 or carmody@gvtc.com) or co-chair Lois Ricci (poepjr@aol.com or 830-899-5362).

COMAL COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS GARDEN

The Fairgrounds Committee will not meet in November. For more information, contact Aleta Meyer (aleta_meyer@hotmail.com or 830-629-2929) or Jane Langley (830-620-4264).

LINDHEIMER GARDENS

The Lindheimer Garden workday will be Tuesday, November 9 at 9 am. See you there. Contact Germaine Tuff (830-629-1127 or germainetuff@hotmail.com) if you have questions.

NEWSLETTER

The planning meeting for the November issue is Tuesday, November 2 at 11 am at the River House Tea Room in Gruene. Contact Editor Bonnie Leitch (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, contact Julie Siliven (rejhs@gvtc.com or 830-885-2665).

HOSPICE NEW BRAUNFELS

Hope Hospice workday will be Wednesday, November 17, at 8:30 am. For information, contact Harlan Kraft (210-846-5643 or harlankraft@gmail.com).

WEBSITE

Check the website on-line at the website <http://mastergardener.comal.tx.us/> for new “how to” videos.

Comal Gardener

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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)

Post the following calendar for easy reference to November CMG activities.

NOVEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 8:30 am Ext Off Gardens 11 am Newsletter Mtg	3 10 am Exec Board Mtg	4	5	6
7	8	9 9 am Lindheimer Gardens	10 9 am Conservation Plaza	11 Extension Office Closed – County Holiday	12	13
14	15 9 am New Hope Butterfly	16 8:30 am Ext Off Gardens	17 8:30 am Hope Hospice 6 pm Membership Mtg	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 HAPPY THANKSGIVING	26	27
				Extension Office Closed – County Holidays		
28	29	30				