

Master Gardener Emeritus – John Coleman

John Coleman retired as a chemical engineer and moved from Houston to Kerrville in 1981. He and his wife purchased and operated The Greenery, a nursery, for many years. It was during this time that John began to write a gardening column for the Kerrville Daily Times. His extensive knowledge of landscaping, trees, and native plants was a welcomed resource for everyone living in the Hill Country. John's newspaper column was noticed by County Extension Agent, Eddie Holland. With a little cajoling, Holland convinced John to help with the many horticulture questions coming into the office, and while John proved to be a great help, it quickly became apparent even more assistance was needed.

It occurred to John that this was exactly the situation that led to the founding of the Master Gardener program. So began his search for Master Gardeners who might be living in the Kerrville area. In good time, he met Tommie Airhart, a Certified Master Gardener from Galveston, and Loren Hutchinson, a Certified Master Gardener from San Antonio. Shortly thereafter, the three began the process of forming a Master Gardener organization for the Hill Country. According to Tommie Airhart, "It was like the Keystone Cops. We were running around everywhere. This was in February of 2002, and we had our very first class in March!" And as they say, "The rest is history."