



# The Guadalupe Gardener



January 2015

TEXAS A&M  
**AGRILIFE**  
Extension Service

A monthly publication of the Guadalupe County Master Gardeners in cooperation with the Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension, Guadalupe County

## President's Corner

Dad was a real estate broker and a moonlight gardener.

He woke up early for him, somewhere an hour or two before noon, had a good breakfast then brokered real estate in San Antonio from early afternoon to late evening. His customers were mostly men and women whose work obligations prevented them from looking at homes on other than evenings and weekends.

He loved gardening, loved landscaping, and did a beautiful job of blending different colored and textured plants with natural stone and man made materials. Dominant ancestral genes swirled in his blood guiding his landscape design and giving energy to virtually anything he planted. Despite an extensive home library, there were no books on sound horticultural practices, no almanac to guide his decisions, no back issues of Texas Seeds to remind him what needed to be done, when.



And he did it by the light of the moon...or in the dark, moonless night.

Most of his work was on the east and north sides of our house where the plants he loved would be protected from the hot Texas sun. Patrolling police sometimes challenged his intentions when he worked on either street-side of our corner house.

As a pre-teen I would join him when awakened by a shovel grating inside a wheel barrow, or a hoe scraping against concrete. At one, two or three in the morning I'd be talked into helping  
(Continued on page 4)

## January Meeting

**Thursday, January 15th - 7 PM**  
**AgriLIFE Extension Building**

January 15 – Networking Sessions – speakers will be from the GCMG Specialists and from the GCMG Speakers Bureau

Social & Refreshments 6:30 PM  
Program at 7 PM followed by Business Meeting

Don't forget your name tag  
- and plants for the plant exchange

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# Association News



**Newly Certified Master Gardeners**  
Certificates were presented by Travis Franke, Guadalupe County AgriLIFE Extension Agent, Bob Teweles, Cindy Waechter, and Dave Elder to: (left to right, top to bottom) Kathy Bennett, Mike Chandler, Bob Cox, Jon Elia (Class 25), Beth Henry, Kay McElveen, Marla Miller, Melissa Murley, Karen Patterson and the cupcake lady, Carol Suchan. Except as noted all were graduating and certifying from Class 26.

Photos by Marvin "T" Taylor

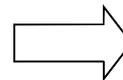
**Congratulations!**



GCMG  
Christmas  
Social  
at the  
Big Red  
Barn



Photos by  
Marvin "T" Taylor





## 2014 Master Gardener Christmas - Holiday Social

I have a lot of Thank yous to send out to our members. First I want to thank everyone for taking time during this very busy time of year to come and bring your great food items to share. We had a great turnout this year! Next I want to thank all the great volunteers who helped with the Social. It was truly appreciated. I need to thank Kat Taylor and Betty Hughes for cooking the Turkeys and Liz Romero for her great tasting hams. Lastly I have to send special thanks to Pat Schultze and of course Betty Hughes for all their hard work. I would not have been able to do it without their help.

Best wishes in 2015. Sincerely, Treva Hicks, Christmas Social Volunteer Coordinator

### (President - continued from page 1)

pull weeds, dig holes or stack stones. As a teenager I rolled over and pulled a pillow over my head.

Fast forward thirty-five years and two strokes later and I would find myself pushing Dad's wheelchair on visits to the botanical center. I watched him marvel at the variety of vegetation and reach with octogenarian hands to snip leaves, crumble them though his fingers and bring the plant's fragrance to his nose so that he might categorize it in the taxonomy of his mind.

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I gave a Master Gardener talk once in which I asked the audience to describe what it was that interested them in gardening and to share a problem they face in their landscape...that collectively we might help address. We never got to the problems.

One person, then another...then one after the other...all...described childhood gardening moments shared with loved ones - parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, others - and how those moments helped shape their interest in things they help grow. That wasn't what I'd planned.

I was anxious about how my friends-help-friends-with-gardening-tips strategy wasn't working. It gave way to friends just telling their stories and becoming better friends in the telling. But something told me to just let it happen. A litany of fond memories cascaded through the room filling it with a re-dedication to gardening I could never have achieved.

I guess that's the way it is. A passion for a particular activity passes from one generation to another...inspiring those who come after to pursue it further. In our case, gardening.

I suspect that for most of us there is something in our past =a wonderful story of how we were influenced...the story that eventually led us to become Master Gardeners...the story within us that keeps us coming back.

I look forward to the landscaping I've got planned for 2015. I look forward to the things we will do together to feed the public's passion for gardening. But mostly, I look forward to hearing your story.

Best wishes, Jose

PS Several years ago the house I grew up in was sold and converted to a neighborhood bank. My wife and I stole into the property one weekend during the reconstruction to rescue a few of my father's plants and a truckload of flagstones otherwise destined for rubble. A Mexican Honeysuckle and some flagstones grace our home still...three houses later and fifty years after Dad first used them to beautify the Contreras family home.

## Class 26 Graduates



Front Row from Left – (sitting) Joanne Shanafelt, Beth Henry, Melissa Murley, Cynthia Leos, Donna Wise, Laura Dylla, (standing) Bree Meyers, Kathy Bennett, Mary Styblo (Class Assistant)

Second/Third Row from Left – Karen Patterson, Carol Suchan, Mike Chandler, Cindy Waechter (Class Coordinator), Kay McElveen, Bob Cox, KJ Kjolhede, Marla Miller, Janie Herb, Dave Elder (Class Coordinator), Bill Brewer, Mike Murley

Class 26 graduated at the 18 December Holiday Social with all 19 students receiving their Intern Certificates! Successful course completion by all students indicates the high interest and energy level of the new Interns which they demonstrated throughout the entire 17 week course. Nine students Certified as Master Gardeners at the social, (see page 2). Please take the opportunity to meet and greet our new Interns and Master Gardeners. Class 26 has already had a significant positive impact on our Guadalupe County Master Gardeners (see page 14). Keep up the EXCITEMENT!

Many Master Gardeners made important contributions to Class 26; Dave Elder as our Assistant Class Coordinator, Mary Styblo, our Class Assistant and Sponsor Coordinator, and our Guest Assistant Class Coordinators Kim Darrough, John Lewicki, Bob Teweles, Jose Contreras, Welta Burris, and Sandy Foss. Speaking of Sponsor Program, our sponsors helped in many ways to enhance the student experience, which shows in their student's success. Kudos to our sponsors: Joyce Friesenhahn, Jose Contreras, Liz Romero, Mary Styblo, Janet Magee, Treva Hicks, Dave Elder, Ellen Laubhan, Ramonita Cardona, Patricia Watkins, Laurie Brunnell, Virginia Biggs, Jerilyn Preston, Marvin Borth, Larry Taylor and Pam Turner.

The Propagation Class was fantastic thanks to the planning and execution of Deedy Wright and Kathy Carroll, our very own GCMG Propagation Specialists. Assisting them were Ramonita Cardona, Jerilyn Preston, Betty Hughes, Treva Hicks, and Joyce Friesenhahn.

Another group providing critical class support were our Test Graders. Led by Joyce Briscoe, test graders included Carmen Rosas, Judy Johnson, Maria Montalvo, Toni Guiles, Denise Bonds, Lillian Agustus, Joyce Friesenhahn, and Welta Buris. Thank you all for an excellent job!

When one class graduates, the next class begins. Planning for Class 27 will be starting in January with Class Coordinator Kay McElveen and Assistant Class Coordinator Mike Murley, both from Class 26! Mary Styblo has agreed to be the Sponsor Coordinator again next year. As you can see, it takes a lot of volunteers to make a Class come together. If you are interested in helping with Class 27, contact either Kay or Mike.

Submitted by Cindy Waechter, Assistant Class Coordinator

## Volunteer Recognition Program Changes for 2015

The GCMG Volunteer Recognition Program, established in July 2013 as a test through December 2014, was implemented to encourage Master Gardeners to volunteer and report their volunteer and continuing education hours on a monthly basis. Recently, you were asked to participate in a survey regarding your thoughts about the program to assist the board in determining whether to continue, change or cancel the program.

Out of the 15 survey respondents, 93% felt the program did not result in an increase in your volunteering. On the other hand, 73% felt the program resulted in more timely hours reporting, which was the primary program goal.

We also received suggestions to change the program to better acknowledge all the folks who met the monthly criteria instead of only the 5 whose names were drawn each month. The board felt this suggestion had a lot of merit.

Considering the program's purpose and the feedback received, the board decided to continue the program with the following changes. For every month you qualify for the monthly drawing (reporting 5 hours by the last day of the month in VMS), your name will be entered into the Annual Drawing. So, if you qualify for nine out of the 12 months of the year, you will have nine chances to win the Annual Drawing. All other program requirements remain the same for now.

- A. Purpose:** To encourage GCMG Master Gardeners to Volunteer and Report Volunteer and Continuing Education Hours on a monthly basis.
- B. Eligibility:** Certified Texas Master Gardeners who report a minimum of five (5) Volunteer and/or Continuing Education Hours in the on-line Volunteer Management System (VMS) earned during the month by the last calendar day of the month are eligible for the following month's Volunteer Recognition Drawing at the GCMG monthly membership meeting or social. **Volunteer and Continuing Education Hours to include travel time earned by attending the GCMG Monthly Membership meetings will not be included in the required five minimum hours.**
- C. GCMG Board Members, Interns, Students, Associates and Honorary members are not eligible to participate in the Monthly/Annual Volunteer Recognition Drawing.
- D. Members do not have to be present at the monthly membership meeting/social to win.
- E. Monthly Volunteer Recognition Drawing:**
  - 1. One (1) name will be drawn each month and receive a \$20 gift certificate from a local nursery supporting the Master Gardener program.
  - 2. All names entered in the monthly drawing will be entered into the annual grand prize drawing.
  - 3. Monthly winners are eligible for all succeeding months providing they meet the minimum eligibility requirements for each monthly drawing.
- F. Annual Volunteer Recognition Drawing**
  - 1. GCMG will conduct two (2) Volunteer Recognition Drawings at the Holiday Social, the Monthly Volunteer Recognition Drawing for those who meet eligibility as of 30 November and the Annual Volunteer Recognition Drawing to include all names entered into each of the twelve (12) monthly drawings.
  - 2. The annual grand prizewinner will receive a \$150 gift certificate.
- G. Annual Program Cost:** The program costs \$390 per year.

Submitted by Cindy Waechter

## FUTURE PROGRAMS

February 19 – Pat Mokry will talk on Identifying Plant Diseases, and Keeping Plants Healthy

## December Volunteer Recognition Program

82 Master Gardeners, 61% of our Certified members, participated in the 2014 Program. Fantastic! Of special note, 3 members were eligible for the drawing all 12 months; Joyce Friesenhahn, John Lewicki, and Elaine McIntyre. Another 3 Master Gardeners qualified every month but one; Mary Bowe, Joyce Briscoe, and Iris Seale. Well done!

21 Master Gardeners qualified in the December Volunteer Recognition Program Drawing. Congratulations to **Jerilyn Preston our December winner**. As our December Volunteer, Jerilyn won a \$20 gift certificate to Maldonado Nursery. In addition, four other names were drawn for entry into the year-end grand prize drawing for a \$150 gift certificate. They were **Patricia Watkins, Dale Odvody, Guadalupe Rodriguez, and Sandra Foss**.

Immediately following the December Drawing, the Annual 2014 Volunteer Recognition Program drawing was held. The drawing consisted of the 60 names that had been drawn during the monthly drawings, 5 each month. Congratulations to **Karen Wallock who won a \$150 gift certificate to Schulz Nursery**.

Thanks to all our volunteers for your hard work and effort. As a group you reported 11,206 volunteer and 2,230 continuing education hours for the year.

To qualify for the Monthly Volunteer Recognition Program drawing, Certified Guadalupe County Master Gardeners must report a minimum of 5 volunteer and continuing education hours earned during the month in VMS by the last calendar day of the month. Hours earned for attendance at the monthly GCMG Membership Meeting are not included in the minimum 5 hours, except those earned for meeting setup. Board members do not participate in the Volunteer Recognition Program.

Don't forget to earn and report your hours by 31 January 2015 to be eligible for the February Membership Drawing.

## Does Your Club Need Great Speakers?

The Guadalupe County Master Gardeners' Speakers Bureau has speakers available on the following subjects:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Attracting Butterflies and Song Birds to your Yard | Plant Propagation                          |
| Compost and its Benefits                           | Rainwater Harvesting                       |
| Composting with Worms                              | Roses A-Z                                  |
| Container Gardening                                | Shade Gardening                            |
| Drip Irrigation                                    | Trees That Do Well in South Texas          |
| Firewise Landscaping                               | Urban Forestry                             |
| Growing Plants from Seed                           | Vegetable Gardening                        |
| Herbs for South Texas                              | Wildflowers (gathering and planting seeds) |
| Lawn Care  | Xeriscape Landscaping                      |
| Low Water Landscaping                              |  |
| Native Plants in Your Landscape                    |  |
| Orchids  |  |

Contact: Treva Hicks at 830-303-4712 or [hicks1t@lycos.com](mailto:hicks1t@lycos.com); Attention: Speakers Bureau to set up a speaker for your club or organization.

*Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.*

## DOWN THE GARDEN PATH BY THE TEXAS MASTER GARDENER

It was beautiful weather for my journey to Abilene for the Fall Texas Garden Club Convention last week. The countryside was cloaked with the soft purple blooms of Blazing Star (*Liatris mucronata*), an attractive fall blooming wildflower.

As Vice President for Scholarship, it was my privilege to award \$8000 to some extremely bright young students. TGC encourages students in the study of horticulture and its many disciplines. The scholarship program was developed to insure the future by providing scholarships to deserving young people.



While our convention is primarily for business, we had many events that made it a pleasure. A stop in Buffalo Gap for a meal at Perini's Steakhouse, home to a giant armadillo, gave everyone a chance to renew friendships and enjoy a good meal at a renowned restaurant and working ranch.

We ventured to CISCO College for a tour of "Earthkind" Rose and Perennial Gardens. Dr. Steve George, Environmental Landscape Specialist with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, presented an informative program on how they trial plants for the Earth-Kind Environmental Landscape Management System. Dr. George is considered the father of the Earthkind system. The goal of the system is for gardeners, whether novice or expert, to enjoy beautiful, productive landscapes with minimal maintenance while providing maximum protection for the environment. The system combines the best of organic gardening, traditional gardening and landscaping techniques to create a new system for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is a research-proven system that is environmentally responsible and founded on real-world effectiveness. Dr. George stated that the system allows the gardener to make decisions based on a deep, abiding respect for the environment using the latest scientifically-sound, research-based information derived from the garden trials. The trials use Earth-Kind techniques in plant selection and culture.

The dwarf rose trials at CISCO College consist of three large beds. Three to six inches of fully-finished plant-derived compost was worked into each bed. Then each bed was planted with the same 28 roses in different orders to expose them to different conditions of light and moisture. The beds were then covered with three inches of native tree mulch which was maintained year-round. Plants were watered the first year with a drip system. After the first year the plants were left to the vagaries of Mother Nature. Other than adding to the mulch and fluffing it, no fertilizer is applied to the roses. Pesticides are not used unless absolutely necessary and then only an environmentally responsible product.

As a group, the Drift roses are scoring high in the trials. Sweet Drift, Peach Drift and Red Drift have scored higher than all the other roses planted in the test beds. Apricot, Pink and White Drift scored a little lower in the trials but all were in bloom with lush leaf growth when we visited the gardens. Roses of all sizes on the Earth-Kind list include Belinda's Dream, The Fairy, Mutabilis, La Marne, the Knock Out series, Cecile Brunner, Caldwell Pink, the Carefree series, and Duchesse de Brabant. You may view pictures and read detailed information about these roses and others on the Earth-Kind list at [earthkindroses.tamu.edu](http://earthkindroses.tamu.edu)

Working the techniques of the Earth-Kind system into your everyday gardening will reduce expenses, protect the environment and provide for beautiful roses. Roses grown with these techniques have little need for fertilizer, pesticides, and less water - the best of all worlds.

Happy Gardening

Gwen DeWitt - 358-9473 or 813-9936