

FEBRUARY 2026

GUADALUPE GARDENER

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

What's the Buzzzz?



- **Monthly meeting on February 19th. The food theme is Mardi Gras!**
- **Check out Member Services for new leadership for 2026.**
- **New Special Volunteer Opportunities available.**
- **Don't forget about Seed Exchange!**
- **Great Continuing Education classes in the near future.**
- **Class 41 is off and running.**
- **Grow Team is already in gear, but it's not too late to help. Contact Clayton Phelps if you are interested in extra volunteer hours.**

Letter from the President	2
Membership Corner	3-14
Monthly Meeting	15
Ask the Master Gardeners	16
Facebook	17
Wandering Gardeners	18-19
NPSOT Meeting	20
Continuing Education	21-25
Special Volunteer Opportunities	26-28
Volunteer Opportunities	29-34
Member Services	35-36



Letter from the President

February 2026 message from the GCMG president.

Good day fellow gardeners! Have you had your soil tested lately? This is the perfect time of year for cleaning & sharpening your garden tools, planting those bare-root-deciduous & evergreen trees, and getting your soil tested. Warm weather will soon be here; by planning now, you'll be ready to put in your perfect spring garden.

Planning now is exactly what your GCMG leaders are doing. Many of the events that fund and keep our non-profit, community-based organization are in the planning stages right now. Contact Clayton Phelps if you'd like to be on the Grow Team, and/or Paul Carter to help with the spring Plant Sales. We are also in the early stages of planning the 2027 GCMG Calendar and Horticulture Guide. Next year's theme is Fruit and Nut Trees. If you'd like to help, contact Pam Younger or Diana Hard.

MG Class 41 is off and running, the plant sales will soon be starting, spring scholarships for students at Alamo Colleges are in the works, and our many exciting garden projects are progressing nicely due to all the dedicated Point of Contact Master Gardeners. You are an awesome, hardworking bunch, thank you for your perseverance.

Did you know that every time you give gardening advice you are fulfilling your obligation to be an outstanding Guadalupe County Master Gardener? You are! Giving lectures is only one way of educating the community. Keep up the good work, I thank you for volunteering and for your support. Happy Gardening!

At your service,
April Rippel
2026 GCMG President

*"I like gardening — it's a place where I find myself when I need to lose myself."
-- Alice Sebold*



Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report Month Ending December 31, 2025 Prepared by David Koepp, Membership Director

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director's Monthly Report

Month Ending 31 December 2025 Prepared by David Koepp, Membership Director

Executive Summary:

- During the January membership meeting, we presented several 10, 15, & 25 year service awards to members! Congratulations to them all!

Status	Last Name	First Name	Years of Service Milestones
Certified	Burton	Rodney	Met 10 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Cover	Kay	Met 10 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Cunningham	Laura	Met 10 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Rippel	April	Met 10 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Woodlee	Mike	Met 10 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Hyatt	Judith	Met 15 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Knobles	Janice	Met 15 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Marcotte	Clara Mae	Met 25 year in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Schultze	Pat	Met 25 years in GCMG in 2025
Certified	Gonzalez	Penny	Met 25 years in GCMG in 2025

- The deadline for getting your 2025 hours entered in VMS and dues paid for 2026 was 12/31/2025.
 - A. **127 met or exceeded ALL Recertification Requirements for 2025! Yay!**
 - B. **11** members took a leave of absence (LOA)
 - C. **4** members left the organization, and another **18** have been moved into inactive status due to not responding to calls or emails.
 - D. We have **8** 2025 Interns who hopefully will all certify by mid-year 2026. **2025 Interns** have **until 6/30/2026** to get their 50 volunteer hours in to achieve their certification.
 - E. We had **33** folks signed up, but a few had to drop or postpone, so we have 30 that are part of class 41 which started in January 2026!
 - F. While Class 41 is now well underway by the time you read this, we still want to keep the **Recruiting** effort active for the next upcoming class (see more on Recruiting below).
- **Please note** that some of the numbers above will not match the charts below, as the charts below were compiled on 1/5/2026, while this document was compiled on 1/26/2026. If you have any questions, please reach out to me.
- **For everyone who did NOT meet their 2025 recertification requirements and didn't pay their dues in time, but wishes to continue on with GCMG, please reach out to the Membership Director as soon as possible:** David Koepp dhkoepp.gcmg@gmail.com or call/text me at 210-263-3624. You may be able to request a leave of absence (LOA) if you had a qualified reason, otherwise there is a reinstatement process documented in the PPM on page 11 under Chapter 5 Membership Section E (see excerpt below) that can be followed.
 - E. **Reinstatement of a Lapsed GCMG Master Gardener Intern or Texas Master Gardener.**
On occasion, a Master Gardener Intern or Texas Master Gardener may allow their membership to lapse and later determine they would like to again become an active GCMG member. It is the lapsed individual's responsibility to apply in writing or via email to the Board of Directors for reinstatement. The decision to allow the individual to pursue reinstatement requirements is made at the discretion of the Board, providing the individual has been in a lapsed status for no more than two (2) years, although the Board, at its discretion, may extend this time frame. The Board may reinstate membership if the individual accomplishes the following requirements within one (1) year from approval to pursue reinstatement.

Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

1. Applies, pays for and passes a new criminal background check prior to volunteering time on any GCMG project (unless their prior one has not yet expired).
 2. Audits a minimum of six (6) classes at the next Master Gardener class at no additional cost. Field trips are not considered classes for this purpose.
 3. A lapsed **Intern** is required to complete 50 (fifty) volunteer hours and any other certification requirements. A lapsed **Texas Master Gardener** is required to complete the current number of volunteer and continuing education hours required for recertification. This may be done concurrently with or prior to attending the classes. Time spent in auditing class sessions is not counted as either volunteer service or continuing education credits.
 4. Pay prorated annual dues based on time of certification.
- **For 2026**, Aside from the many project gardens, there are also many indoor opportunities to get volunteer hours, and tons of online education available.
 - A. **Earn Volunteer hours (The following is not a complete list – Refer to the 2026 Approved Projects List which you can find on VMS under the “Other” document category, or on our website at the bottom of the Projects for Volunteer Hours page there is also a link to it below):**
 - Seed Exchange - Every Wednesday 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (Except for 11/25/2026 & 12/23/2026) - Contact [David](#) or [Karen Koepp](#) or [Ernestine Sykes](#) Come sort seeds, pack seeds from donations brought in by others, or help us out in other ways.
 - Learn to film the membership meetings and lunch and learns - Contact [Paul Prince](#)
 - Work on any of our projects - See the [Approved Project List](#) for the Projects and POCs
 - Write an article for the monthly newsletter - Contact [Melinda Lucas](#)
 - Submit an article for the Wandering Gardener section of our monthly Newsletter including pictures of a garden you have visited - Contact [Melinda Lucas](#)
 - You can view the recordings of our prior monthly membership meetings for volunteer & CE hours -the business portion counts towards Volunteer hours, the educational presentation portion counts towards CE hours <https://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/continuing-education/>
 - Recruit for the next Master Gardener Class – Pick up an updated recruiting packet from the Master Gardener Office upstairs. If you run out of flyers, applications or other materials, come grab another packet or ask one of the MG Office POCs for whatever supplies you may need.
 - Another opportunity to gain volunteer hours and maybe make a new friend is to be a mentor to one or more new interns for class 41. Consider also reaching out to our remaining class 40 interns to see if they need anything to help them get their certification completed. Several of our 2025 interns still need to complete many volunteer hours by the end of June 2026 to certify and may welcome a friendly offer of mentorship to help them achieve that goal.
 - The Seed Exchange wants your help to produce several GCMG-branded documents, pamphlets, brochures to use to help advertise what we do here at GCMG and to provide education on our Seed library, Seed saving techniques, Seed starting, Varieties that do well here, Planting times, etc. If you like to write and are interested in producing one of more of these types of materials for us, please contact one of the Seed Exchange POCs, contact info can be found on our project page here: <https://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/volunteer-outreach-service-opportunities/seed-exchange/>

Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

- The MG Office is also looking for some help from members who are creative and would like to create some GCMG-branded cards for the various occasions that we send cards out for including: Thank You cards, Get Well, Sympathy, etc. Please contact one of the MG Office POCs; contact info can be found on our project page here: <https://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/volunteer-outreach-service-opportunities/ask-a-master-gardener-online-and-office-hours/>
- Many other opportunities exist throughout the year, just ask any GCMG Board member how you can help. Volunteer hours including travel time to/from can only be claimed for activities providing horticultural education and horticultural community service of approved GCMG projects, including but not limited to:
 - Educational outreach (i.e. Info booths), teaching, and demonstration projects.
 - Plant growing/care/sales, crafts, and food items to sell for fundraising events.
 - Volunteering at any of the GCMG approved gardens/parks/projects.
 - If you have any questions on this contact the Membership Director [David Koepp](#).

B. Earn Continuing Education hours:

- GCMG Lunch & Learns/Monthly Meetings (the business portion of the Monthly Meeting counts towards Volunteer hours, the educational presentation portion counts towards CE hours). Our recordings can be found on our website here: <https://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/continuing-education/> or on our GCMG YouTube Channel (Be sure to subscribe) <https://www.youtube.com/@gcmgtx>
 - BCMG YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@MyExtension210>
 - On-line Programs via Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>
 - Plant Party webinar series is a collaboration between Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. <https://southtexasrangelands.tamu.edu/plant-party/>
 - Have questions about what can count towards your CE hours? Refer to the GCMG Policy & Procedure Manual (PPM), which you can find on our website here <http://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/files/2025/01/PPM-October2024.pdf>, starting on page 20 under Section C. Definition of Approved Continuing Education (CE) Hours. If not listed there, you can contact the GCMG Education Director [Karen Koepp](#).
 - Many video links in our monthly newsletter also apply towards CE hours.
 - See our [website](#) and [web calendar](#) for more details.
- The timely input of your volunteer (and CE hours) is critical to our organization's funding; thus, we cannot stress the importance of the timely input of your hours enough.

As promised, we have started our **EVS group sessions** and will continue to offer them to anyone as needed throughout 2026 and beyond. If your EVS/Background Check is coming up soon, two things will happen. One you will (or should) get an email from AgriLife Learn letting you know you are within 60 days of expiration. You can certainly do the course on your own, but you also can also take it with in-person support from us. And two, I will also be sending emails to those who need to do EVS & Background Check Updates.

Extension Volunteer Standards (EVS) is a State-mandated process that all program members (Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, Master Wellness, 4-H, etc.) must complete every three years. AgriLife has

Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

received a lot of feedback on EVS and is working to improve the process soon. In the meantime, we'll help you get through it if needed. I recently completed the program for the first time and wanted to share my experience with EVS. It was actually very easy. Throughout the course, I kept expecting the shoe to drop and encounter all kinds of crazy things from what I was hearing about it, but it never happened. Was it perfect? No, I encountered two things that cost me a bit of time: 1) I clicked on the wrong > (go forward button) and had to repeat a screen I had already listened to once. Basically, on some screens, you'll see two sets of < & > (go back or forward arrows). One set is at the top right of the screen, and one set near the bottom right. What I found is if you have a > at the bottom right of the screen always use that one unless you don't have it then click the one on top **or** if the screen tells you to click a particular > then do that. 2) Impatience. There seems to be built in pauses between certain screens and at the end of modules. It will say you are finished so you think oh click on one of the > to move forward. Nope, wait a few seconds and a popup message will say new content is available and tells you where to click. You'll quickly get the hang of it after it happens the first time. You will get 3 hours CE credit for taking the course even if it takes you less time. It took me 2 hours and 24 minutes and that was with interruptions. You need to enter those 3 hours in VMS as continuing education (And your travel time to & from the office also counts as volunteer time if you came in to take the course). If you need help, please reach out to me.

Almost everyone who needed to get EVS completed in this first quarter has already completed it or is working on it. I will continue to offer to help anyone on Wednesdays during the Seed Exchange time 2-5 PM. You can bring in your laptop (or we will have some available), and we will help you go through the entire EVS certification process and background check submission. EVS takes between 2.5 to 3 hours to complete, but before this, you first need to submit your application online at <https://evs.tamu.edu/application/master-gardener> and be approved by Travis. We will need to coordinate in advance so we will know if we have enough laptops or computers available (unless you're bringing your own in which case it must have Wi-Fi connectivity capability). Frank will also support anyone on other days/times at his & April's shop.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this report, with VMS or EVS, please contact David Koepf dhkoepf.GCMG@gmail.com or GV: 210-263-3624 voice/text friendly

2026 Recertification Requirements are **20** hours Volunteer & **10** hours Continuing Education. The new hours requirements were announced back in 2024 and became effective on 1/1/2025. The purpose of this change was to align all states into a common standard. Please note that the local Extension Agents can increase this number but not reduce it. FYI, many of the surrounding counties require much more Volunteer & CE time as well as other requirements and commitments, so if you are thinking about moving to a different county MG organization I suggest you look into their requirements before doing so.

Did you know you could access VMS from your smartphone? Yes, the screen is smaller than a computer screen, but it presents on the phone a bit differently. I don't find it smaller or harder to use and you still enter your time via VMS in a web browser the same way as from a computer. My preference is to enter my time on my phone as I find it more convenient to do so as well.

We recommend entering your hours into VMS if not the same day as the task performed, then at least weekly! **But worst case: Please, log all of your hours by or before the last day of the month in order for them to be counted properly.**

Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

Monthly Report Summary 2025 Year End Breakdown:

Month	# Members Reporting	Mbrs w/ 5+ Hours	Vol Hours	CE Hours	Contacts	Pounds Produce	Mileage
January	88	38	1083.00	135.75	178	223	4529.7
February	106	62	1484.85	169.00	107	261	5513.5
March	114	74	1870.38	264.50	210	108	8641.1
April	110	84	2072.35	144.25	622	220	8771.0
May	96	59	1152.80	582.50	101	1525	4509.4
June	62	45	941.25	47.75	41	1969	3926.1
July	81	39	1168.14	101.10	46	740	3923.1
August	80	42	1219.50	123.00	191	515	5077.9
September	82	47	1604.60	207.90	193	1099	6208.1
October	84	59	2203.55	134.90	747	884	7950.1
November	66	39	878.40	110.00	1541	1515	3936.6
December	51	21	763.25	109.75	20	1074	2527.6
2025 (Final)	127	n/a	16442.1	2130.4	3997.0	10133.0	65514.3
2024	158	n/a	14959.25	1712.00	2539	9362	60378.5
2023	165	n/a	14790.50	1738.15	1664	5593	55688.7
2022	146	n/a	11786.80	1646.25	3261	0	44919.6
2025 Totals per VMS Program Summary (includes entries made past monthly deadline)			17,480.17	2,384.65	4,169.00	10,186.00	70,049.17
Difference			1,038.10	254.25	172.00	53.00	4,534.90

Monthly Report December Summary Breakdown:

	# Submitted	# Not Submitted
Number of Certified Members that reported any amount of hours for December by reporting deadline	51	106
Volunteer Hours (Certified Status) December 2025		
Members with 0 hours reported	78	106
Members with >0 & <5 hours	21	13
Members with => 5 & <25 hours	22	9
Members with => 25 & <100 hours	5	0
Members with => 100 & <200 hours	2	0
Members with => 200 & <300 hours	0	0
Members with => 300 & <400 hours	0	0
Members with => 400 & <500 hours	0	0
Members with => 500 hours	0	0
	Vol	CE
Number of Volunteers Reporting this year (final) January- December 2025	127	30
Volunteer Hours Year-To-Date		
Number of Members with 0 hours	0	2*
Number of Members with >0 & <5 hours	0	1*
Number of Members with => 5 & <25 hours	23	112
Number of Members with => 25 & <100 hours	59	12
Number of Members with => 100 & <200 hours	21	0
Number of Members with => 200 & <300 hours	14	0
Number of Members with => 300 & <400 hours	2	0
Number of Members with => 400 & <500 hours	1	0
Number of Members with => 500 hours	7	0

*This is due to Interns who certified in 2025. Initial Cert only requires 50 Hrs Vol + MG class, not add'l CE

Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

December 2025 Volunteer Recognition Drawing of Certified* Master Gardeners

Certified Members in December with 5+ hours (*Voting Board Members not eligible)	
1. ALTHAUSER, MARZELLUS "MARCEL"	12. MEDEIROS-OROPEZA, KATHERINE "KAT"
2. BOLLINGER, MARK "BO"	13. MICKWEE, LINDA
3. BURTON, RODNEY	14. MOTT, ROBERT "KEITH"
4. CARRELL, KAREN	15. ODVODY, DALE
5. CHASON, ANGELA	16. ODVODY, DEANNA "ANN"
6. COX, ROBERT "BOB"	17. POWADA, CAYE
7. EILAND, RACHEL	18. RODRIGUEZ, ELLENIA "ELLENA"
8. GEINZER, REBECCA	19. STEELE, TIMOTHY "TIM"
9. HENRY, BETH	20. SYKES, ERNESTINE
10. KNOBLES, JANICE	21. WOODLEE, MICHAEL "MIKE"
11. LUCAS, MELINDA	

Recognition Drawings:

November 5+ [Tim Steele](#), December 5+ [Rachel Eiland](#), December Door Prize: [Millie Glasgow](#)

Summary of 2025 Projects Hours, Produce, & Mileage

Project	VOL		Pounds of	
	Hours	CE Hours	Produce	Miles
	(Sum)	(Sum)	(Sum)	(Sum)
Advanced Master Gardener Training Classes/Courses	23.00	117.00	0.00	15.00
Christian Cupboard Community Garden - Education - Seguin	14.00	1.00	0.00	34.00
Christian Cupboard Community Garden - Maintenance/Harvesting - Seguin	273.95	1.25	475.00	382.00
Continuing Education (Lunch & Learns, Webinars, & other education events that do not fall under another project)	371.75	1,251.00	0.00	8,172.30
Fundraisers (Calendar & Garden Guide, Craft Opp's, Farmers Market, GCFair Raffle, Grow Team, Plant Sales)	3,311.14	25	0	9391.00
Guadalupe County Demonstration Garden - Education - Schertz	147.25	0.00	0.00	35.00
Guadalupe County Demonstration Garden - Maintenance/Harvesting - Schertz	1,274.70	0.00	5,257.00	3,219.00
Gutierrez Garden Park - Education - Schertz	32.00	4.00	0.00	84.40
Gutierrez Garden Park - Maintenance - Schertz	526.80	3.50	0.00	1,860.60
LULAC Community Garden - Education - Seguin	3.00	0.00	0.00	5.00
LULAC Community Garden - Maintenance/Harvesting - Seguin	33.50	0.00	0.00	90.00
LVISD Primary School - Education - La Vernia	257.25	2.00	0.00	750.00
LVISD Primary School - Maintenance/Harvesting - La Vernia	70.50	0.00	0.00	455.00
Master Gardener Training Class	711.85	474.00	0.00	1,970.00
Membership Meeting & Educational Presentation (incl MM Refreshments, Setup & Cleanup)	863.55	368.25	0.00	8,415.10
MG Organizational Support (BoD, Committee work, MGOffice, Newsletter, Research Library, Seed Exchange, Technology, Website work)	3608.15	24.5	0	9213.4
Mill Street Community Garden - Education - New Braunfels	14.00	0.00	0.00	84.00
Mill Street Community Garden - Maintenance/Harvesting - New Braunfels	275.35	0.00	16.00	1,690.00
Other Gardens - Education(Used for reciprocal cooperation between Counties)	8.00	3.00	0.00	80.00
Other Gardens - Maintenance/Harvesting (Used for reciprocal cooperation between Counties)	18.50	0.00	0.00	74.00
Public Education/Outreach (AAMG Booth,BRB Kiosk,Christmas Tree,GCFair Non-fundraising activities,Lectures Given,Pumpkin Contest)	62.50	0.00	0.00	4,945.63
Red Barn-Garden - Education/School Tours - Seguin	715.75	3.00	0.00	1,666.20
Red Barn-Garden - Maintenance/Harvesting - Seguin	1,768.60	0.00	4,438.00	10,409.20
Ron Pedde Memorial Community Garden - Education - Cibolo	12.50	0.00	0.00	10.00
Ron Pedde Memorial Community Garden - Maintenance/Harvesting - Cibolo	133.00	0.00	0.00	115.70
St. Andrews Community Garden - Education - Seguin	365.13	2.00	0.00	2,185.20
St. Andrews Community Garden - Maintenance/Harvesting - Seguin	197.95	0.40	0.00	784.64
Texas State Master Gardeners Association (Quarterly Calls, IMGCC Events, Other TMGA related work).	21.50	13.00	0.00	155.00
Transfer from another county (Admin use Only)	189.95	8.00	0.00	1,092.30
Veteran's Memorial Park - Education - Marion	5.50	0.00	0.00	36.00
Veteran's Memorial Park - Maintenance - Marion	212.60	0.00	0.00	1,265.00
Whitehall Polley Mansion - Maintenance - La Vernia	59.00	2.00	0.00	316.00
Youth Education Gardening (Junior Master Gardener)	36.75	1.00	0.00	53.00
Grand Summary	17,194.42	2,331.40	10,186.00	69,053.67

Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

Milestone Club:

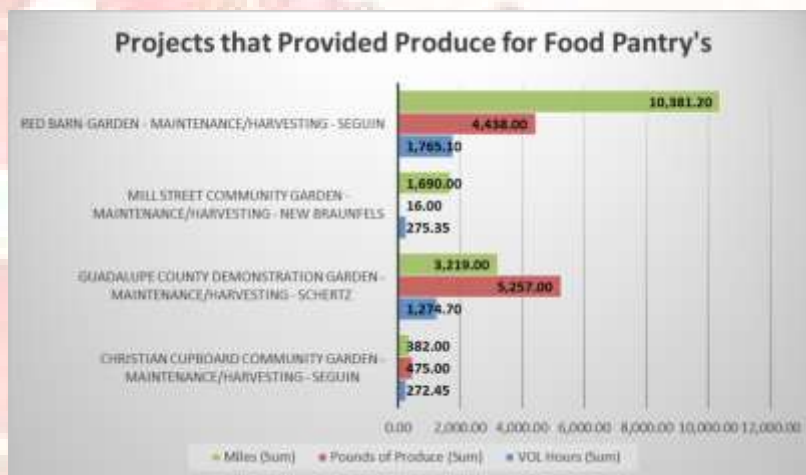
Certified Members Milestone Achievements Volunteer Hours 2025 Final					
	VOL Hours (Sum)	CE Hours (Sum)		VOL Hours (Sum)	CE Hours (Sum)
100 Hour Club			300 Hour Club		
ALTHAUSER, MARZELLUS "MARCEL"	131.00	21.00	CARTER, PAUL	322.00	18.00
ANCELET, LISA	104.75	15.00	MCELVEEN, HELEN "KAY"	370.00	22.00
BOLLINGER, MARK "BO"	122.00	23.75			
BRKICH, KAREN	195.50	79.00	400 Hour Club	VOL	CE
CARRELL, KAREN	138.00	12.00	RIPPEL, FRANK	437.00	21.75
CARROLL, KATHLEEN "KATHY"	115.00	41.00			
COCKERELL, REX "ALAN"	102.50	14.40	500 Hour Club	VOL	CE
COVER, KAY	175.00	19.00	LUCAS, MELINDA	536.80	44.25
DOMINGUEZ, BRENDA	166.00	10.25	STEELE, TIMOTHY "TIM"	549.50	15.00
FISHER, DAVID	130.00	41.00			
GEINZER, REBECCA	107.20	12.00	600 Hour Club	VOL	CE
HARMON, DOMINIQUE	145.85	14.00	MALONE, PAMELA "PAM"	678.75	21.50
HUNTER, BELINDA "BENNA"	141.00	26.00	YOUNGER, PAMELA "PAM"	618.75	24.25
JOHNSON, BJORN	101.00	13.00			
KNEUPPER, VIRGINIA "RUTHIE"	136.25	14.00	700 Hour Club	VOL	CE
MEDEIROS-OROPEZA, KATHERINE "KAT"	157.30	14.50	ODVODY, DALE	739.00	10.00
MOTT, ROBERT "KEITH"	113.40	10.00			
MULLINS, GARY "MAC"	131.50	22.00	800 Hour Club		
PADGETT, ANNETTE	125.00	14.00	No members		
PHELPS, CLAYTON	139.75	45.00			
STYBLO, MARY	111.00	17.50	900 Hour Club	VOL	CE
			RIPPEL, APRIL	914.50	52.75
200 Hour Club	VOL	CE			
BURTON, RODNEY	268.50	21.00	1000 Hour Club	VOL	CE
CHASON, ANGELA	200.25	18.00	KOEPP, DAVID	1,095.75	68.50
COX, ROBERT "BOB"	254.50	17.50			
DYKES, MARIA	240.50	17.50			
GRIFFIS, JUDY	201.00	14.00			
HENRY, BETH	277.00	19.00			
KNOBLES, JANICE	203.95	12.00			
KOEPP, KAREN	234.25	55.00			
MEADE, CONSTANCE	247.00	10.00			
ODVODY, DEANNA "ANN"	265.50	10.00			
OTTENAD, ANNE	214.50	14.50			
PRINCE, PAUL	269.75	12.75			
SMITH, KATHLEEN	210.00	20.00			
SYKES, ERNESTINE	282.60	15.00			

During the January Membership meeting, many members were not present. I have your service years award, Milestone Pin awards, and your 2026 Membership cards. You can get them at the next meeting or on Wednesdays between 2 & 5 PM from me up in the MG Office. Each year we give special attention to those who hit certain milestones in terms of hours worked. I thought it would be appropriate to include and acknowledge not only the "milestone" achievers, but everyone who met or exceeded their 2025 Certification requirements in the Honorable Mentions list below. After all, we are all part of the same team and each of us contributes to the whole. Without everyone's contributions and teamwork, we wouldn't exist. I also wanted to thank everyone who reached out to me and asked questions. Please keep them coming, I am happy to help.

Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

Honorable Mentions - Certified Members Milestone Achievements Volunteer Hours 2025 Final					
	VOL Hours (Sum)	CE Hours (Sum)		VOL Hours (Sum)	CE Hours (Sum)
SHELF ORLANDI, MARCIA	99.25	16.00	HAAG, GREGORY	34.00	25.00
SAULS, LESLIE "CASEY"	90.50	14.00	WILGEN, INGRID	33.50	10.50
SIMS, JUDITH "JUDY"	87.50	10.75	MAGEE, JANET	32.50	18.50
ADAMS, MABEL "KATHY"	76.50	17.00	GLASGOW, MILDRED "MILLIE"	32.15	10.00
DE JESUS, SANDRA	71.50	16.00	CASELL, EDIE	31.50	12.50
FOWLER, LARRY	70.20	34.75	MUSCHALEK, ROBIN	30.50	11.00
HERNANDEZ, PETER	69.00	15.00	HILLMAN, SARAH	30.00	10.25
HUEBINGER, CLAIRE	69.00	10.00	ALLEN, HEATHER	28.50	13.75
CARTER, MARTHA "MARTY"	68.50	21.50	HAINES, BRENDA	28.50	10.00
COOPER, SHARON	65.50	17.00	EDWARDS, MELVADEAN "MELVA"	27.00	17.75
FOX, VIRGINIA "GINNY"	65.25	13.00	LEACOCK, SUZANNE	27.00	13.00
EILAND, RACHEL	65.00	15.00	MUSCHALEK, KEITH	27.00	12.00
HARD, ROSE "DIANA"	64.25	17.00	FOSS, LISA	27.00	10.00
MARTINEZ, DIANA	62.00	14.00	BRAVO-GONZALEZ, DIANA	26.00	14.50
SOTO, BLANCA	61.00	2.00	MARCOTTE, CLARA MAE	26.00	14.50
COLLIER, COLLEEN	59.00	11.00	JADWIN, JANICE	25.50	10.00
SMITH, ANNETTE	58.95	10.50	TAYLOR, DENESEE	25.45	10.40
BURRIS, WELTA	58.50	12.00	RIOS, CAROL	25.00	16.00
CUNNINGHAM, LAURA	58.00	10.00	BONDS, DENISE	24.00	12.00
CARRILLO, BREA	57.45	14.00	GONZALEZ, POTA "PENNY"	24.00	10.10
FRIESENHAHN, JOYCE	57.25	20.75	REAL, DEBORAH "DEBBIE"	24.00	10.00
PATTON, BARBARA	56.00	19.00	FOSS, SANDRA	23.50	10.00
MCCORQUODALE, JANET "LISA"	54.60	11.25	DIOTTE, LESLIE	23.00	21.00
HOLBROOK, JULY	54.50	14.00	POWADA, CAYE	23.00	12.50
MARTIN, TAMMY	54.00	14.00	SCULL, RENEE	22.50	10.00
GUTIERREZ, CELINA	52.00	14.00	SALAZAR, WENDY	22.00	14.25
MILBURN, JESSICA	50.50	14.00	JOHNSON, KATHLEEN "KATHY"	22.00	10.00
FORSYTH, LISA	50.00	14.00	WINGATE, LINSHA	21.75	10.00
SUCHAN, CAROL	48.35	10.00	RICHARDSON, THOMAS	21.50	14.00
SCHULTZE, PATRICIA "PAT"	44.00	12.00	ANDERSON, MARILYN	21.00	10.50
MONCADA, JUAN	43.50	0.00	WOODLEE, MICHAEL "MIKE"	21.00	10.50
GONZALES, TOMASA "TOMY"	43.00	0.00	NIELSON, JAMIE	20.75	10.50
ALBRECHT, DON	42.75	15.00	CAVAZOS, RACHEL	20.50	13.50
OXFORD, PAULA	40.00	10.00	MICKWEE, LINDA	20.50	10.50
RODRIGUEZ, ELLENIA "ELLENA"	37.50	10.00	LANDEROS, ANN	20.50	10.00
NIELSON, MARY	37.00	12.25	JONES, PEGGY	20.00	25.00
SKORUPA, SYLVIA	36.75	12.00	RIEDER, ROBIN	20.00	12.00
KIRK, JESSICA "JESS"	35.53	10.25	HYATT, JUDITH	20.00	10.75
FOX, JOYCE	35.00	11.00	RANCE, CELESTE	20.00	10.25
TREMAINE BLACK, SANDY	34.50	24.00	BORTH, MARVIN	20.00	10.00
LYSSY, CYNTHIA	34.50	10.75	MATTKE, SAMANTHA	20.00	10.00



Membership Corner

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Membership Director Report

127 Members who have met or exceeded Recertification Requirements in 2025

ADAMS, MABEL "KATHY"	GONZALES, TOMASA "TOMY"	MUSCHALEK, KEITH
ALBRECHT, DON	GONZALEZ, POTA "PENNY"	MUSCHALEK, ROBIN
ALLEN, HEATHER	GRIFFIS, JUDY	NIELSON, JAMIE
ALTHAUER, MARZELLUS "MARCEL"	GUTIERREZ, CELINA	NIELSON, MARY
ANCELET, LISA	HAAG, GREGORY	ODVODY, DALE
ANDERSON, MARILYN	HAINES, BRENDA	ODVODY, DEANNA "ANN"
BOLLINGER, MARK "BO"	HARD, ROSE "DIANA"	OTTENAD, ANNE
BONDS, DENISE	HARMON, DOMINIQUE	OXFORD, PAULA
BORTH, MARVIN	HENRY, BETH	PADGETT, ANNETTE
BRAVO-GONZALEZ, DIANA	HERNANDEZ, PETER	PATTON, BARBARA
BRKICH, KAREN	HILLMAN, SARAH	PHELPS, CLAYTON
BURRIS, WELTA	HOLBROOK, JULY	POWADA, CAYE
BURTON, RODNEY	HUEBINGER, CLAIRE	PRINCE, PAUL
CARRELL, KAREN	HUNTER, BELINDA "BENNA"	RANCE, CELESTE
CARRILLO, BREA	HYATT, JUDITH	REAL, DEBORAH "DEBBIE"
CARROLL, KATHLEEN "KATHY"	JADWIN, JANICE	RICHARDSON, THOMAS
CARTER, MARTHA "MARTY"	JOHNSON, BJORN	RIEDER, ROBIN
CARTER, PAUL	JOHNSON, KATHLEEN "KATHY"	RIOS, CAROL
CASSELL, EDIE	JONES, PEGGY	RIPPEL, APRIL
CAVAZOS, RACHEL	KIRK, JESSICA "JESS"	RIPPEL, FRANK
CHASON, ANGELA	KNEUPPER, VIRGINIA "RUTHIE"	RODRIGUEZ, ELLENIA "ELLENA"
COCKERELL, REX "ALAN"	KNOBLES, JANICE	SALAZAR, WENDY
COLLIER, COLLEEN	KOEPP, DAVID	SAULS, LESLIE "CASEY"
COOPER, SHARON	KOEPP, KAREN	SCHULTZE, PATRICIA "PAT"
COVER, KAY	LANDEROS, ANN	SCULL, RENEE
COX, ROBERT "BOB"	LEACOCK, SUZANNE	SHELF ORLANDI, MARCIA
CUNNINGHAM, LAURA	LUCAS, MELINDA	SIMS, JUDITH "JUDY"
DE JESUS, SANDRA	LYSSY, CYNTHIA	SKORUPA, SYLVIA
DIOTTE, LESLIE	MAGEE, JANET	SMITH, ANNETTE
DOMINGUEZ, BRENDA	MALONE, PAMELA "PAM"	SMITH, KATHLEEN
DYKES, MARIA	MARCOTTE, CLARA MAE	SOTO, BLANCA
EDWARDS, MELVADEAN "MELVA"	MARTIN, TAMMY	STEELE, TIMOTHY "TIM"
EILAND, RACHEL	MARTINEZ, DIANA	STYBLO, MARY
FISHER, DAVID	MATTKE, SAMANTHA	SUCHAN, CAROL
FORSYTH, LISA	MCCORQUODALE, JANET "LISA"	SYKES, ERNESTINE
FOSS, LISA	MCELVEEN, HELEN "KAY"	TAYLOR, DENESEE
FOSS, SANDRA	MEADE, CONSTANCE	TREMAINE BLACK, SANDY
FOWLER, LARRY	MEDEIROS-OROPEZA, KATHERINE "KAT"	WILGEN, INGRID
FOX, JOYCE	MICKWEE, LINDA	WINGATE, LINSHA
FOX, VIRGINIA "GINNY"	MILBURN, JESSICA	WOODLEE, MICHAEL "MIKE"
FRIESENHAHN, JOYCE	MONCADA, JUAN	YOUNGER, PAMELA "PAM"
GEINZER, REBECCA	MOTT, ROBERT "KEITH"	
GLASGOW, MILDRED "MILLIE"	MULLINS, GARY "MAC"	

Missed the Monthly meeting? You can view the pre-meeting slides and the Membership Meeting Agenda & slides on our website under "[Continuing Education](#)" then click on the "[GCMG Lunch & Learns/Monthly Meetings- Virtual](#)" link. You can find all our recorded meetings, Lunch & Learns, and slideshows that are available here broken down by year and month.

Something missing from our website, have a comment or suggestion? [Please click here to let us know!](#)

Membership Corner



**Rodney Burton and
April Rippel
10 Years of Service**



**Clara Mae Marcotte
25 Years of
Service**



**April Rippel 900 Hours
David Koepp 1000 Hours**



**Pam Younger and
Pam Malone
600 Hours**



**Tim Steele and
Melinda J Lucas
500 Hours**



**Frank Rippel
400 Hours**

Photos provided by:
Frank & April Rippel

Membership Corner



**Kay McElveen and
Paul Carter
300 Hours**



**Maria Dykes
Advanced Training for
TX Superstars**



**Maria Dykes
Award for Service**



**200 Hour Club
Rodney Burton, Beth Henry,
Kathleen Smith, Maria Dykes,
Ernestine Sykes, Judy Griffis**



Photos provided by:
Frank & April Rippel



**100 Hour Club
Kathy Carroll, Marcel Althausen, Mac Mullins, Mary Styblo, Clayton Phelps, Karen
Brkich, Keith Mott, David Fisher, Karen Carrell, Mark Bollinger, and Lisa Ancelet**

Membership Corner

Bug Juice (An Entomology Tidbit)

Karen Koepp



Mining Bees are some of Texas's earliest signs of spring, emerging as early as late winter when few other pollinators are active. These gentle, solitary native bees nest in the ground and play a vital role in pollinating early-blooming wildflowers, fruit trees and garden plants. Because they are active in cooler temperatures, mining bees fill a crucial pollination gap before honey bees and other insects become abundant, helping kick-start healthy spring ecosystems. You can protect and support mining bees by leaving patches of undisturbed, bare or lightly mulched soil for nesting, avoiding pesticides – especially in early spring—and planting a variety of native, early-blooming flowers. These simple actions help ensure mining bees can continue their essential work across the Texas landscape.



What's that Bug?

The Canna Leaf Roller/Canna Skipper

Melinda Lucas



Canna Lilies are very popular and easy to grow flowers in our area. If you are familiar with this plant it is most likely that you have also seen one, or more, of their large leaves riddled with symmetrical holes and wondered what caused this unique pattern. Sometimes you may even notice a webbing inside the leaf that makes it difficult to pull apart.



This is the Canna Leaf Roller Caterpillar, a very unattractive, gooey worm looking, caterpillar. The caterpillar makes the symmetrical shaped holes by biting the leaf before it has fully opened. It will take one big bite and move forward and take another bite, and on and on until it reaches the edge of the leaf. Then the leaf unrolls to display a pattern of holes.

Once the caterpillar is done eating, it is time to move on to the next stage of life by webbing itself inside of the rolled leaf of the canna lily. This is how it gets its name. Then it emerges as a cute little brown skipper butterfly.

There are many people who find caterpillars disgusting and destructive, but we would have no butterflies or moths without them.



Monthly Meeting



Master Gardener's
February 19th, 2026
Membership Meeting

**Protecting
Our Dark Sky -
Reduce Light Pollution**

**With Cindy Luongo-Cassidy,
President of DarkSky Texas**

210 E. Live Oak St.
Seguin, Texas

- * 5:45 Social w/ Good Food
- * 6:15 Business Meeting
- * 7:00 Presentation

Free & Open To The Public

A&M Agrilife Extension is an equal opportunity employer & program provider. The Texas A&M University system and the County Commissioners Courts Cooperating. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the program should contact the County Extension Office at least one week prior to the program or event to request mobility, hearing, visual, or other assistance.

Ask the Master Gardeners

Clara Mae Marcotte and Ernestine Sykes are the Ask A Master Gardener GCMGs with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. If you have a Gardening question, please feel free to text or email the Master Gardeners: Text: 210-544-0756 or email: GCMGTX@gmail.com

Q: Everything froze. When can I cut plants back?

A: Not yet. Last year, the last freezes at my house were February 19 through February 22 (with the temperature getting down to 21 on February 20). If you cut now, warmer weather will cause plants to sprout and those new sprouts are very tender. If the plants are dead, then you can clean up. A good site on pruning is <https://www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/landscape/proper-pruning-techniques>. However, my Chrome with Bing would not let me in. I had to go to Google and go in that way. It is a multi-page article with plenty of good information. Don't forget that spring-flowering shrubs and trees bloom on last season's growth and shouldn't be pruned until after they bloom. Examples include redbud and Texas mountain laurel.

Q: What are a few helpful suggestions that you would give for the new gardener in Central Texas?

A: First, I would have you buy a journal that you can use just for gardening. Write down the names of the plants you buy and the dates they were planted. List the first freeze each year and the last freeze. Keep track of rainfall, the dates you fertilized, as well as the amount and the analysis. My next suggestion is to look at your neighbors' yards to see what plants grow well. I would not buy out of an out-of-state catalog because Texas growing is unique; also, I like the hands-on experience that a local nursery gives you. Visit your local Extension office and check in with the Master Gardeners. Wonderful informative programs are available. For instance, at the last Lunch and Learn, Extension Agent Travis Franke spoke on Tree Management and Care. I wish I had heard his talk before I wasted all that money on some of those fruit trees I bought over the years.

Q: I am planning what to plant in my beds for the spring and summer. What annuals do you suggest?

A: For now I would stick to the cool-season annuals that you can find at your local nursery. Looking at last year's February and March temperatures in my journal I see that it got down to 37 degrees March 10, and in the 40s the following week. Unless you are very brave, I would wait until the end of March to put in my summer annuals. (In fact, for the library planters, I wait until the snapdragons and the kale start to look bad before I replace them).

Warm season annuals include Amaranthus, bachelor buttons (gomprena), begonia, cockscomb, coleus, copper plant, cosmos, geranium, impatiens, marigold, Mexican heather, morning glory, petunia, portulaca, purslane, salvia, sunflower, verbena, and zinnia. My personal favorite is the vinca (periwinkle) because it gives no trouble and seems resistant to disease. My only trouble with it in the library planters are the ants who are attracted to the water during our hot summers.

Check us out on

facebook

GCMG FACEBOOK COMMUNITY

by Kathy Adams

We added 28 new members to our Facebook Community. They want to know how to grow sustainable gardens, fruit trees and vegetables. Welcome all.

Our top posters were April Rippel, Melva Edwards, and Kat Medeiros-Oropeza.

What To Plant In February

Spinach, Carrots, Lettuce, Peas, Onions, Garlic, Kale, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Beets, Swiss Chard, Cabbage, Asparagus, Leek, Mustard Greens, Parsley, and Potatoes.

How To Create The Self-sufficient Yard

- Start with one system and expand over time. Every step towards Self-sufficiency counts. Progress is progress moving forward no matter how small.
- Vertical Garden
- Grow plants on trellis and towers
- Raised Gardens
- Grow plants that reproduce year after year
- Extend Your Season
- Use greenhouses, cold frames, and roll row covers to grow food through out the year
- Medicinal Garden
- Grow healing herbs for tinctures, teas, salves and natural remedies.
- Root Cellar
- Store preserves and root vegetables in cool, dark conditions for months.
- Composting
- Have rich soil amendments by turning kitchen scraps and garden waste into compost.
- Food Preservation
- Can, dehydrate, freeze and ferment to extend your harvest year round.
- Water Management
- Collect rainwater from your roof, store in barrels and tanks, use drip irrigation to minimize waste.
- Off Grid Power
 - Power tools, lights, and irrigation pumps using solar panels and small wind turbines.

Thank you to all who posted. Please continue to post photos of your gardens, garden helps/hacks, and questions.

All are appreciated.

Enjoy Your Gardens

The Wandering Gardeners

Martha's Bloomers

Navasota, TX

<https://marthasbloomers.com/>

By Melinda J Lucas



While heading northeast to College Station, TX we had to pass near Navasota and another great spot that was on my list of places to visit, Martha's Bloomers. It did not disappoint.

I learned about Martha's Bloomers in a Texas travel magazine quite a few years ago and added it to my long list of "must visits".

Named after two cats, Martha and Bloomer, the business opened

in 2000 and is charming, quaint and eclectic. It's everything a gardener could dream of: a garden, a nursery, a charming gift shop and an adorable café with a patio covered with roses and flowers.

Since we were hungry we started in the café that is located all the way to the back of the property. To get there you have to walk through the store and the nursery courtyard.

After being seated we were brought our menus along with some delicious hot orange tea and a piece of blueberry scone. This is great advertising because needless to say we ended up going home with a package of that tea mix. The food was great and so was the service. Everyone was very friendly and helpful.

The nursery was very limited since it was December, but the prices were reasonable on the items that were available. I definitely plan on making a return trip in the spring and seeing Martha's Bloomers in full bloom.



The Wandering Gardeners



If you would like to have your wandering gardener experience published, please email your favorite 7 pictures and 3 short paragraphs to Melinda Lucas at MelLucas78218@Gmail.com

NPSOT

Native Plant Society of Texas Guadalupe Chapter Meeting

Beyond Bluebonnets: An Introduction to Local Wildflower Diversity

Presented By: Andy Blair
20-year Conservation Biologist and
Plant Centric Ecologist

Tuesday February 10, 2026

Social 6:30 PM • Program 7 PM

Chapter Meeting After Program

St. John Lutheran Church
600 S Center St (FM 465)
Marion, TX 78125



Continuing Education

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service - Serving Texas' Needs



Education Director Report January 8, 2026

Karen Koepp
2025 GCMG, Education Director

Education Hours Snapshot of January – December 2025 (127 Certified Members)

2% have "0" hours – 2 Members*
1% have "0.25-2.25" hours – 1 Member*
*Newly certified interns...no additional CE's required.
0% have "2.5-5.75" hours – 0 Members
0% have "6-9.75" hours – 0 Members
97% have "10+" hours – 124 Members

Nicely Done!!

If you need CE hours check out our website
Under the "Continuing Education" tab for
A variety of educational opportunities and
Then make sure to input your hours in VMS. 😊

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Continuing Education

Lunch & Learns

February 2026

AgriLife February 11 12:00-1:00

Spring Gardening presented by Karen Brkich

Spring success starts now! Learn how to prepare your garden, plant seasonal favorites and jump-start growth for a healthy, productive season. Practical tips and proven strategies will help you garden smarter and enjoy better results.

Schertz Public Library February 14 11:30-1:00

Composting presented by Peter Hernandez

Transform food scraps and yard waste into a rich soil-like material that not only benefits your garden in many ways but also reduces your carbon footprint.

Seguin Public Library February 14 12:00-1:30

Spring Gardening presented by Karen Brkich

Spring success starts now! Learn how to prepare your garden, plant seasonal favorites and jump-start growth for a healthy, productive season. Practical tips and proven strategies will help you garden smarter and enjoy better results.

March 2026

AgriLife March - PENDING

Schertz Public Library March 14 11:30-1:00

Butterflies, Bees and Moths—Oh My! Presented by Kathy Carroll

Explore the fascinating world of pollinators and why they matter as well as tips and tricks for inviting pollinators into your gardening space.

Seguin Public Library March 14 12:00-1:30

Container Gardening presented by Karen Brkich

Whether you're gardening on a patio, balcony or backyard, container gardening lets you grow more with less space and great results. Tips for growing plants in pots, raised beds or small spaces.

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Continuing Education

Spring 2026 Seminar

Comal Master Gardener's

Spring Seminar, *From the Ground Up*

Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

New Braunfels Civic/Convention Center

375 S. Castell Avenue, New Braunfels, TX 78130

ALL GARDENERS WELCOME



We are excited to announce registration for our Spring 2026 is now open. Click [HERE](#) for more information about the speakers.

We hope to see you there!

Registration link [HERE](#)



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

TEXAS
MASTER GARDENER
TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION
Guadalupe County

Continuing Education

Upcoming Advanced Training Offerings

[Junior Master Gardener®](#) – February 17-18, 2026 (VIRTUAL)

[Trees and Tree Care](#) – March 19-21, 2026; hosted by Tarrant County Master Gardeners in Fort Worth, TX

Advanced Training is offered to certified Extension Master Gardeners whereby they may obtain greater knowledge that supports or expands specific county educational programs. Agents must approve a volunteer to attend an Advanced Training Class. Attendees of Advanced Training Classes are to **prioritize public education** for the purpose of attending.

Advanced Training classes provide a minimum of 16 hours of education. Following completion of the training, an individual must complete a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer service in the subject matter. These hours are **in addition** to annual recertification requirements. It is recommended that a designated program or project be outlined prior to attending the training class for the volunteer to be able to obtain certification. **Two** certified Master Gardener volunteers per county are eligible to attend as space permits.

<https://txmg.org/master-gardener-training/training10/training5/specialist>

Best Regards,

David Koeppe

GCMG Membership Director, Webmaster, and PoC for the GCMG Office, Research Library, & Seed Exchange

dhkoeppe.GCMG@gmail.com

GV: 210-263-3624 voice/text friendly



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

TEXAS
MASTER GARDENER
TARRANT COUNTY AGRILIFE EXTENSION
Tarrant County

Continuing Education

Please check out the following websites for Continuing Education opportunities:

- Garden Style San Antonio, TX <https://www.gardenstylesanantonio.com/events-calendar/>
- Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin TX <https://www.wildflower.org/events/>
- The Natural Gardener, 8646 Old Bee Caves Rd, Austin, TX <https://tngaustin.com/classes/>
- San Antonio Botanical Gardens, San Antonio, TX <https://www.sabot.org/calendar/>
- Rainbow Gardens, San Antonio, TX <https://www.rainbowgardens.biz/events/>
- Green Jays Garden Center, 100 Elm Grove Rd, Seguin, TX <https://www.greenjaygardens.com/basic-01> (please check website for classes and details).
- Bexar County Master Gardeners, San Antonio, TX <https://bexarmg.org/events/>



The *Plant Party* webinar series is a collaboration between Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. These quarterly webinars are meant to promote advanced training on all things plants and to get people excited about the flora of our state.



Join us for the next Plant Party:
"Identifying Plants Without Leaves or Flowers"
December 10, 2025; 10-11:30 am (Central)
Registration Details will be Available Soon!

Find ALL Plant Party recordings and future events posted at:

<https://southtexasrangelands.tamu.edu/plant-party/>

Extension programs educate Texans in the areas of agriculture, environmental stewardship, health and wellness, youth and adult life skills, human capital and leadership, and community economic development and offers the knowledge resources of the land-grant university system to educate Guadalupe County residents for self-improvement, individual action and community problem solving. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is a statewide educational agency and a member of the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS), linked in a unique partnership with the nationwide Cooperative Extension System and Texas county governments. The following videos are for your viewing and completion of CE Hours.

Home Garden Series: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjqPKX68x1S5BK_6TGI_LYle3_XUiPjzz

Horticulture & Gardening Webinar Series with David Rodriguez:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjqPKX68x1S4J6Urb7-JiyXOCT7Mhtats>

Entomology Webinar Series with Molly Keck:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjqPKX68x1S50uWVbqYzV3k2nfmxeA_9g

Special Volunteer Opportunities



Seed Exchange update for February 2026

Only a few more weeks until we are back in the gardens. If you haven't started some of your seeds indoors, you are already running behind. However, it is not too late to get things growing.

If you have started your seeds and something goes wrong, you can probably find replacement seeds in the Seed Exchange.

There are many seeds and many volunteer hours available. So, if you have extra time on your hands and want to do some inside volunteer time, come on over to the AgriLife Library on Wednesday afternoons and please bring in any extra seeds that you harvested this past year, or come in and help sort and label the seeds that are available.

The following page has a list of some of the many seeds that are available and more are coming in all the time, so please head up to the seed exchange in the Master Gardeners Office and take advantage of the free seeds that are available on Wednesdays from 2-4 PM. If those hours don't work for you due to work or other commitments please reach out to one of the POC's. They will be glad to help if you have questions or need access at other days and times.

Looking forward to seeing you soon!

POCs: David & Karen Koepp – dhkoepp.gcmg@gmail.com,
kkoepp.gcmg@gmail.com, or call/text 210-263-3624,

Ernestine Sykes – ejackson.sykes@gmail.com or text 210-544-0756

Special Volunteer Opportunities

Vegetables

Asparagus
Beets - Many varieties
Bok Choy
Broccoli
Broccoli Raab
Brussel Sprouts
Cabbage
Cauliflower
Carrot - Many Varieties
Celery
Collard
Cucumber - Many Varieties
Eggplant - White, Green, Purple, & Black
Green Beans - Many varieties Bush & Pole
Hot Pepper - Many varieties
Hot Pepper - Ghost
Hot Pepper - Habanero
Hot Pepper - Lemon
Mild Pepper - Many varieties
Mild Pepper - Yellow Banana
Mild & Hot versions Jalapeno
Kale
Lettuce - Many Varieties
Lima Bean
Mesclun Salad Mix
Mustard Greens
Okra
Onion - Yellow Bulb
Onion - Bunching
Parsnip
Peas - Many Varieties
Pumpkin - Many Varieties
Radish - Many Varieties
Spinach - Many Varieties
Squash - Many Varieties Summer & Winter
Squash - Butternut
Squash - Gold Winter
Squash - Scallop
Squash - Yellow Summer - Many varieties
Squash - Zucchini - Many varieties
Sweet Corn - Many varieties
Sweet Pepper - Many varieties
Tomato - Many varieties small & large / color
Tomato - Golden
Tomato - Roma
Turnip
Veggie Packs - Large Starter Kit

Fruit

Cantaloupe
Watermelon - Many Varieties

Herbs

Basil - Many varieties
Chamomile
Chives
Cilantro
Dill
Lavender
Lemon Balm
Oregano
Parsley
Peppermint
Rosemary
Sage
Spearmint
Thyme

Flowers

African Daisy
Agave
Alyssum
American Elm
Bachelor Button
Bee Balm
Blackeyed Susan
Blanket Flower
Blue Aethea
Bluebonnet
Butterfly Flower
Butterfly Weed
Calendula
Canterbury Bells
Cape Coral Vine
Candlestick Bush
Carnation
Chinese Forget-Me-Not
Chrysanthemum
Columbine
Cosmos
Dahlia
Delphinium
Desert Rose
Esperanza
Foxglove
Gaillardia
Gazania
Hibiscus
Holly Hock
Johnny Jumpups
Larkspur
Lupine
Marigold - Several varieties
Monarch Sanctuary Wildflower Mix
Moonflower
Morning Glory - Several varieties
Nasturtium - Several varieties
Painted Daisy
Pansy
Petunia
Poppy
Shasta Daisy
Snow in Summer
Strawflower
Sunflower - Several varieties
Sweet Pea
Sweet William
Thunbergia
White Heath Aster
Wildflower Mix - Several varieties
Yucca - Red & White
Zinnia - Several varieties

Please note we have many varieties of seeds available that are not listed above, so please come see us on Wednesday's from 2-4 PM or feel free to contact one of us via text/email if you have any questions.

Seed Exchange POCs: David & Karen Koepf – dhkoepf.gcmg@gmail.com , kkoepf@gmail.com , or call/text 210-263-3624, Ernestine Sykes – ejackson.sykes@gmail.com or text 210-544-0756
<https://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/volunteer-outreach-service-opportunities/seed-exchange/>

Also for some seeds we have large bulk 1/2lb pack quantities available as well (Corn, Green Beans, Okra, & Peas)

We still would like your seed donations if you have a surplus of something you have grown successfully!

[Guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/volunteer-outreach-service-opportunities/seed-exchange/](https://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/volunteer-outreach-service-opportunities/seed-exchange/)

Special Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunity

HEB Texas Native Plant/Pollinator Collaboration

This is a statewide educational outreach event where Texas Master Gardeners partner with H-E-B, the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT), and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation (TPWF) to help the public learn about native plants and pollinators.

As a volunteer, you will set up a table at an H-E-B store, answer basic gardening and native plant questions, and share research-based information—exactly what Master Gardeners do best. Most interactions are short, friendly, and highly impactful.

What You Will Do as a Volunteer

Answer basic questions about:

Native plants being sold

Pollinators (bees, butterflies)

Water-wise, sustainable gardening

Hand out approved materials:

H-E-B yellow coupons (2 native plants for \$12)

NPSOT Bookmark/TMG Postcard

Prairie seed mix packets (ecoregion-specific)

Direct customers to trusted online resources for more help

Event Overview

200+ H-E-B stores statewide will sell Texas native plants

Volunteers will select a H-E-B location that is best for them.

The event will occur over two weekends. Volunteers can select the days that work best for them.

Saturday, March 21 (11 am–3 pm) & Sunday, March 22 (12–4 pm)

Saturday, March 28 (11 am–3 pm) & Sunday, March 29 (12–4 pm)

Up to 2 volunteers per store per shift

If you would like to sign up for an event and location, please sign up here:

[H-E-B Tabling Sign up](#)

While this is not a hard deadline, it would be most helpful to have sign-ups before the end of the month.

We will have more information to come, but feel free to ask any questions. We may need to get back with you due to the collaboration between groups, but we believe this is a positive relationship that can open many doors in the future. We'd love for you to join the effort!

Sincerely,

Jayla

Jayla Fry, Ed.D. | Texas Master Gardener Coordinator

Horticultural Sciences Department

2144 TAMU | College Station, TX 77843-2144

ph: 979.321.7015 | jayla.fry@ag.tamu.edu

Volunteer Opportunities

GCMG APPROVED GARDENS, PARKS, AND PROJECTS FOR 2026

Gardens and Park

1. Big Red Barn Garden

[250 Cordova Rd., Seguin, TX](#)

POC: Janice Knobles, jmknobles@yahoo.com

Text: (210) 275-4402

Volunteer Day: Fridays 7:30 a.m. Summer 8:15 a.m. Winter

2. Christian Cupboard Garden

[516 N. Camp, Seguin, TX](#)

POC: Kay McElveen hkaymcelveen@gmail.com

Text: (479) 790-2933

Volunteers work on their own schedule.

3. Guadalupe County Demonstration Garden

[1101 Elbel St., Schertz, TX](#)

POC: Ann Odvody odvodyd@swbell.net

Text: (210) 665-3866

Volunteer Day: Tues / Fri 8 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

4. Gutierrez Garden Park

[1231 Borgfeld Rd., Schertz, TX](#)

POC: Maria Dykes mariaq75@gmail.com

Text: (210) 792-1603

Volunteer days: Tues, Thurs, & Saturdays 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

5. La Vernia Primary School Gardens

[249 FM 1346 S., La Vernia TX](#)

POCs: Kay Cover doncover6969@yahoo.com

Text: (830) 779-2149

Colleen Collier colleen1631@gmail.com

Text: (210) 413-4818

Volunteer Days: Contact the POCs

6. LULAC Community Garden

[1502 Eighth St., Seguin, TX 78155](#)

POC: Juan Moncada jmarcus78702@gmail.com

Text: (512) 701-1696

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

7. Marion Veteran's Memorial Park

[100 W. Huebinger St., Marion, TX](#)

POCs: Carol Suchan ladywithdonkey@yahoo.com

Text: 210-870-4880

Anne Ottenad ron.anne.ottenad@gmail.com

Volunteer Day: Mondays 8-10 a.m.

8. Mill Street Community Garden

[1447 West Mill St., New Braunfels, TX](#)

POCs: Benna Hunter bennahunter@gmail.com

Text: (270) 860-2246

Kathleen Smith kathleensmith1214@gmail.com

Text: (281) 381-5268

Volunteer Day: 2nd Saturday of the month.

9. Polley Mansion Heritage Garden

[11432 FM 539, La Vernia, TX](#)

POCs: Robin Muschalek forcexxi@yahoo.com

Keith Muschalek keith.muschalek@gmail.com

Text: (571) 606-4234

Volunteer Days: Contact POCs

10. Ron Pedde Memorial Community Garden

[1017 Town Creek Rd., Cibolo, TX 78108](#)

POC: Rachel Eiland

rachel.eiland@outlook.com

Text: (757) 513-2842

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

11. St. Andrew's Community Garden

[Corner of S. Crockett & Nolte St., Seguin, TX](#)

POC: Ernestine Sykes ejackson.sykes@gmail.com

Text: (210) 544-0756

Volunteer Days: Wednesday's 9-11 a.m.

12. Other Gardens (used as reciprocal cooperation between Counties or organizations)

Must have board permission to work and claim time in these projects.

For Example:

Irma Lewis Outdoor Learning Center Seguin ISD

Park West

Starcke Park Garden

Starcke Park Golf Course Garden

Wilson County Public Library

Volunteer Opportunities

GCMG APPROVED GARDENS, PARKS, AND PROJECTS FOR 2026

Fundraisers & Related Projects

1. Calendar & Gardening Guide

[210 E. Live Oak St., Seguin](#)

POC: Pam Younger pamyounger54@gmail.com

Text: (512) 656-2322

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

2. Craft Opportunities for Plant Sales

[210 E. Live Oak St., Seguin](#)

POC: Pam Malone ptmalone@live.com

Text: (830) 534-2111

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

3. Earth Day (Typically Last Saturday in April)

Plant Sale Downtown Seguin on the Square

Plant Sales POCs: Paul Carter

greenthumbcarter@gmail.com Text: (830) 481-0817

Tim Steele tlscowboys@hotmail.com Text: (210) 385-2219

4. GC Fair Plant Sales & Raffle (2nd wk/wknd Oct)

[950 S. Austin St., Seguin, TX](#) (Fairgrounds Coliseum)

Lead POC: By Committee

Plant Sales: Paul Carter greenthumbcarter@gmail.com

Text: (830) 481-0817

Raffle: David Fisher gcmgdavidfisher@gmail.com Text:

(361) 920-0368

Volunteer Days: Tuesday-Sunday during Fair Week

5. GCMG Grow Team

Location details will be provided by the POC.

POC: Clayton Phelps kimsgoomer@yahoo.com Text: (832)

641-8580

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

6. Kingsbury Fall Festival (Plant & Craft Sales)

[644 Railway St., Kingsbury, TX 78638](#)

POCs: Paul Carter greenthumbcarter@gmail.com

Text: (830) 481-0817

Sharon Cooper Rscooper3707@gmail.com

Text: (281) 684-4632

Volunteer Day: Contact POC – Event is typically on 1st or

2nd Saturday in November

7. Online Sales & Storefront-Spring/Fall

[4037 Stockdale Hwy, Seguin TX 78155](#)

Regular hours are Wednesday-Saturday* 8am – 5pm.

POCs: April Rippel adrippel@gmail.com

Text: (830) 433-2218

Frank Rippel riptron@gmail.com Text: (830) 305-4007

* Except when it coincides with another GCMG event

8. Pecan Festival (Typically Last Saturday in October)

Garden Tour & more at the Big Red Barn

Plant Sale Downtown Seguin on the Square

Big Red Barn POC: Kay McElveen

hkaymcelveen@gmail.com Text: (479) 790-2933

Plant Sales POCs: Paul Carter

greenthumbcarter@gmail.com Text: (830) 481-0817

Tim Steele tlscowboys@hotmail.com Text: (210) 385-2219

9. Plant Sales Team

Sales will be at various GC locations in Spring & Fall

Plant Sales POCs: Paul Carter

greenthumbcarter@gmail.com Text: (830) 481-0817

Tim Steele tlscowboys@hotmail.com Text: (210) 385-2219

Volunteer Days: Will be posted on website and/or emailed.

10. Yulefest (1st Sunday in December)

[950 S. Austin St., Seguin, TX](#)

POC: April Rippel adrippel@gmail.com

Text: (830) 433-2218

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

Volunteer Opportunities

GCMG APPROVED GARDENS, PARKS, AND PROJECTS FOR 2026

Organizational Support

1. GCMG 2026 Board of Directors

[210 E. Live Oak St., Seguin](#)

Regular Board of Directors Meeting at AgriLife Extension Office 2nd Floor is 2nd Thursday's at 4 PM each month (except in October which is 1st Thursday at 4PM) all members are encouraged to attend.

Past President – Kay McElveen

hkaymcelveen@gmail.com Text: (479) 790-2933

President – April Rippel adrippel@gmail.com Text: (830) 433-2218

President-Elect – Pam Malone ptmalone@live.com Text: (830) 534-2111

Vice-President – Pam Younger

pamyounger54@gmail.com Text: (512) 656-2322

Treasurer – Frank Rippel riptron@gmail.com Text: (830) 305-4007

Secretary – Kathleen Smith

kathleensmith1214@gmail.com Text: (281) 381-5268

Education Director – Karen Koeppe

kkoeppe.gcmg@gmail.com Text: (210) 378-3403

Membership Director – David Koeppe

dhkoeppe.gcmg@gmail.com Text: (210) 263-3624

Volunteer Director – Kathy Carroll

kathleen_carroll@icloud.com Text: (210) 793-1616

Publicity Director – Janice Jadwin jmjadwin@yahoo.com

Text: (210) 848-3634

Master Gardener Class Director – Paul Carter

GreenthumbCarter@gmail.com Text: (830) 481-0817

AgriLife Extension Agent, MG Coordinator – Travis

Franke Travis.Franke@ag.tamu.edu (830) 303-3889

Class Coordinators

(Lead) Paul Carter GreenthumbCarter@gmail.com Text: (830) 481-0817

April Rippel adrippel@gmail.com Text: (830) 433-2218

David Fisher gcmgdavidfisher@gmail.com Text: (361) 920-0368

TMGA (Quarterly Meetings, IMGC Conference, other TMGA related work)

TMGA Director 2yr 2026/27 Primary: April Rippel

adrippel@gmail.com Text: (830) 481-0817

TMGA Director 2yr 2026/2027 **Alternate:** Tim Steele

tlscowboys@hotmail.com Text: (210) 385-2219

TMGA Director 1yr 2025 Primary: Kathy Carroll

kathleen_carroll@icloud.com Text: (210) 793-1616

TMGA Director 1 yr 2025 **Alternate:** Pam Malone

ptmalone@live.com Text: (830) 534-2111

2. GCMG 2025/2026 Audit Committee

Don Albrecht darpp83@sbcglobal.net (806) 341-0373

Dominique Harmon dominiqueah@mac.com (303) 910-7186

Edie Cassell ediecassell@gmail.com (512) 968-5313

3. GCMG Education & Speakers Bureau Team

POC: Karen Koeppe kkoeppe.gcmg@gmail.com Text: (210) 378-3403,

Speakers Bureau POC: **VACANT – Need new POC.**

4. GCMG MG Office, Research Library, & Seed Exchange

[210 E. Live Oak St., Seguin](#)

POCs: David Koeppe dhkoeppe.gcmg@gmail.com Text: (210) 263-3624, Karen Koeppe kkoeppe.gcmg@gmail.com Text: (210) 378-3403, & Ernestine Sykes

ejackson.sykes@gmail.com Text: (210) 544-0756

Volunteer Days: Wed.2-5 p.m.

5. GCMG Monthly Meeting-Refreshments, Setup, & Cleanup

[210 E. Live Oak St., Seguin](#)

POC: Annette Padgett padgettboys4@msn.com

Text: (406) 239-0777

Volunteer Days: 3rd Thursday each month except June & December – Sign up during monthly meeting or contact POC for current needs.

6. GCMG Newsletter

POC: Melinda Lucas meljulucas78218@gmail.com

Text (210) 413-9389

Volunteer Days: Contact POC for needs.

7. GCMG Scholarship Committee

POCs (Lead) Kat Medeiros-Oropeza

katoropeza1975@yahoo.com Text: (210) 577-8863

Don Albrecht darpp83@sbcglobal.net Text: (806) 341-0373

Tim Steele tlscowboys@hotmail.com Text: (210) 385-2219

Ingrid Wilgen essentiallyingrid@gmail.com 210-214-0787

8. GCMG Social Events

Summer POC: April Rippel adrippel@gmail.com

Text: (830) 433-2218

Winter POC: April Rippel adrippel@gmail.com

Text: (830) 433-2218

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

9. GCMG Technology Team

POC: Paul Prince phrogtoo@yahoo.com

Text: (559) 259-4317

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

Volunteer Opportunities

GCMG APPROVED GARDENS, PARKS, AND PROJECTS FOR 2026

Public Education / Outreach

1. Ask A Master Gardener Information Booth

(AAMG)

Location details will be provided by POC.

POC: Mac Mullins macadac242@gmail.com

Text (210) 722-3881

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

2. Big Red Barn Kiosk

[390 Cordova Rd., Seguin, TX](#)

POC: Ernestine Sykes ejackson.sykes@gmail.com

Text: (210) 544-0756

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

3. Christmas Tree Decorating Project

(Nov./Dec.)

[210 E. Live Oak St.](#), (Tree will be on Downtown Square)

POC: Ernestine Sykes ejackson.sykes@gmail.com

Text: (210) 544-0756

Volunteer Days: Contact POC

4. GC Fair AAMG Booth, Kids Crafts, Horticulture Exhibits, Pumpkin Contest (2nd week/weekend Oct.)

[950 S. Austin St., Seguin, TX](#) (Fairgrounds Coliseum)

Lead POC: By Committee

AAMG/Information Booth: Mac Mullins

macadac242@gmail.com Text (210) 722-3881

Horticulture: April Rippel adrippel@gmail.com

Text: (830) 433-2218

Kids Crafts: Pam Malone ptmalone@live.com Text: (830) 534-2111

Pumpkin Decorating Contest Booth: Pam Younger

pamyounger54@gmail.com

Text: (512) 656-2322

Volunteer Days: Tuesday-Sunday during Fair Week

5. GCMG Independence Day Parade Float

POC: Angela Chason angelachason@hotmail.com

Text: (210) 803-6736

Setup Location / Volunteer Days: Contact POC

6. Youth Education – Junior Master Gardeners

[210 E. Live Oak St., Seguin](#)

POC: VACANT – Need new POC.

Volunteer Opportunities

Please check with the listed point of contact before showing up. Times and days may change at any time due to a number of reasons.

Mondays

Marion Veterans Community Garden

100 W Huebinger St., Marion

8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

This is an open park and always needs weeds pulled. Once you know what needs to be done, you would be able to work any time or day that is convenient for your schedule

Contact Carol Suchan
210-870-4880 or email

ladywithdonkey@yahoo.com

or Anne Ottenad

210-860-3636 or email

Ron.anne.ottenad@Gmail.com



Mondays & Wednesdays

Ron Pedde Community Garden

1017 Town Creek Road, Cibolo

For work times

Please contact Rachel Eiland

Text 757-513-2842 or email

rachel.eiland@outlook.com

Wednesdays

MG Office/Library/Seed Exchange

210 E. Live Oak, AgriLife Bldg., Seguin

2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Volunteers are always needed

Please see the Seed Exchange page for more details.

Contact David Koepp at
dhkoepp.gcmg@gmail.com or Karen
Koepp at kkoepp.gcmg@gmail.com
or email Ernestine Sykes at
ejackson.sykes@gmail.com

The office number is 830-379-1972



Volunteer Opportunities

Tuesdays & Thursdays

(& possibly other days)

Gutierrez Park

1231 Borgfeld Rd, Schertz

For times and volunteer opportunities
contact Maria Dykes at 210-792-1603
or email Marialq75@gmail.com

Wednesdays

St Andrew's Community Garden

The corner of Nolte & Crocket St., Seguin

9:00 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.

Weeding, planting and edging and
whatever else needs to be done

Contact Ernestine Sykes

210-544-0756 or email

ejackson.sykes@gmail.com

Tuesdays & Fridays

**Guadalupe County Demonstration
Garden**

1101 Elbel Road, Schertz

(behind the County Annex Building)

8:00 a.m. until 11.00. a.m.

Contact Ann Odvody

210-994-9664 or email

odvodyd@swbell.net

(Always in need of help)

Fridays

Big Red Barn Gardens

250 Cordova Road, Seguin

Start times:

7:30 a.m. (summer)

8:15 a.m. (winter)

Contact Janice Knobles

210-275-4402 or email

jmknobles@yahoo.com



Guadalupe County Master Gardeners, Inc.

210 East Live Oak St.

Seguin, TX 78155

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners <http://www.guadalupecountymastergardeners.org> or <https://gcmgtx.org/> 830-379-1972 Ext 210

Guadalupe County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension <http://guadalupe.agrilife.org/> 830-379-1972

Texas Master Gardeners <http://txmg.org>

GCMG Officers & Board of Directors 2026

President	April Rippel
Past President	Kay McElveen
President Elect	Pam Malone
Vice President	Pam Younger
Secretary	Kathleen Smith
Treasurer	Frank Rippel
Publicity Director	Janice Jadwin
Membership Director	David Koepp
Education Director	Karen Koepp
Training Class Director	Paul Carter
Volunteer Director	Kathy Carrol
AgriLife Agent MG Coordinator	Travis Frank

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Melinda J Lucas, Editor
MelJLucas78218@Gmail.com

REMINDER

If anyone needs a card from the organization for an illness or a loss of a family member, please send an email to: GCMGTX@gmail.com.

Newsletter Staff

Editor - Melinda J Lucas

Proofreaders - David Koepp, Diana Hard, Kat Medeiros-Oropeza, Lisa Ancelet, and Jessica Milburn

Members in Service

Texas Master Gardener Association Directors

Two Year Term (2025-2026) April Rippel, Alternate – Tim Steele

One Year Term (2027) Kathy Carroll, Alternate – Pam Malone

Yule Fest - April Rippel

Pedde Park - Rachel Eiland

Tech Team Lead - Paul Prince

Big Red Barn - Janice Knobles

4th of July Parade - Angela Chason

Newsletter Editor - Melinda J Lucas

Gutierrez Garden Park - Maria Dykes

Facebook Administrator - Kathy Adams

Kingsbury Fall Festival - Sharon Cooper

Plant Sales - Paul Carter and Tim Steele

Ask A Master Gardener Booth - Mac Mullins

Christmas Tree Decorating - Ernestine Sykes

Speakers Bureau Team– Karen Koepp (P.O.C.)

Grow Team Lead By Committee-Clayton Phelps

GCMG Class Coordinators – Paul Carter and April Rippel

Refreshment Coordinator - Anette Padgett (AKA Montana)

Guadalupe Co. Demonstration Garden - Dale & Ann Odvody

GCMG Office/Library/Seed Exchange - David & Karen Koepp, Ernestine Sykes

**GCMG Scholarship Committee Members: Tim Steele, Don Abrecht, Kat Medeiros-Oropeza
2026 County Fair - By Committee, Horticulture April Rippel, Kid's Crafts Pam Malone, Raffle - David Fisher, AAMG/Information booth Mac Mullins, Pumpkin Contest Pam Younger, & Plant Sales Paul Carter**

(For a complete list please visit: <https://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org/about/officers-members-in-service/>)