



The Garden Ridge LIONS' DEN



The Newsletter of the Lions Club of Garden Ridge, Texas
A Club to Serve the Needs of our Community.

Volume I, Issue 2

www.gardenridgelions.org

April, 2021

OUR NEXT MEETING

**THE LIONS CLUB
OF GARDEN RIDGE**
will meet on **Wednesday,**
April 14, at 7:00 p.m.
at the **Garden Ridge
Community Center,**
9400 Municipal Parkway,
Garden Ridge, Texas 78266

Setup at 6:00, social mixer 6:30.

Questions?

Call or email our President,
Bill Foote, at 210-347-3198
or b1bill@hotmail.com.



Upcoming events for Lions:

Meetings, at the Garden Ridge Community Center:

April 14, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
April 28, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
May 12, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
May 26, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
June 9, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
June 23, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.
(New Officer initiation)

Other events:

April 10, Saturday, Lions Camp work day
April 17, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. Bat Cave Road cleanup, meet at the Park
May 1, Lions Camp work day

**There will be an election in
Garden Ridge for Mayor and
two City Council positions.
Please see information about
the election dates and loca-
tions on page 14 and input
from the candidates starting
on page 15 of this newsletter.
Early voting starts 4/19.**

Garden Ridge Lions Club 2020-2021 Officers and Directors

President	Bill Foote	210-347-3198	b1bill@hotmail.com
1st Vice President	Mandy Hagy	254-338-1200	Mandy1122M@aol.com
2nd Vice President	Steve Gallets	254-366-9018	galleste@sbcglobal.net
Director-1 year	Dick Vogt	210-651-5894	NolesVogt@Gmail.com
Director-1 year	Mark Frye	210-326-7307	mcusarad10@att.net
	(Also serves as Program Director)		
Director-2 year	Larry Thompson	210-857-6201	TurboFlyer@aol.com
Director 2-year	Pat Hartley	210-651-6172	Pat_Hartley100@hotmail.com
	(Also serves as LCIF Coordinator)		
Treasurer	Tara Brown		
Secretary	Jim Newbold	210-380-2431	JimNewbold@satx.rr.com
Lion Hunter	Dick Holloway	210-845-9356	rehhardwood@earthlink.net
Lion Tamer	Vic Rodriguez	210-744-6657	VRodriguez@tbointl.com
Tail Twister	(vacant)		
Mktg/Communications	Will Sharp	520-603-5299	Will@wrsholding.com
Service Chair	Noelle Czerniak	757-604-1100	mnczerniak@gmail.com
Immediate Past President	Bill Swint	210-867-0580	swint01@hotmail.com
Newsletter writer/editor	Kerry Ledford	210-656-1873	kledfordtx@gmail.com

The Purposes of the Garden Ridge Lions Club

- To create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.
- To promote the principles of good government and good citizenship.
- To take an active interest in the civic, cultural, social, and moral welfare of the community.
- To unite the members in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship, and mutual understanding.
- To provide a forum for open discussion of all matters of public interest; provided, however, that partisan politics and sectarian religion shall not be debated by club members.
- To encourage service-minded people to serve their community without personal financial reward, and to encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in commerce, industry, professions, public works, and private endeavors.

Garden Ridge Lions Club 2021-2022 Officers and Directors

1. Past President - Bill Foote
2. President - Amanda Hagy: Oversight of the Club (GAT), awards, reporting.
3. 1st Vice president - Steve Gallets: assist the President, and fundraising) (GAT)
4. 2nd Vice President - Al Haddad, serves on the Membership Committee
5. Treasurer - Tara Brown
6. Secretary - Jim Newbold
7. LCI Coordinator - Larry Thompson. Service Committee, assist the secretary as needed, LCI information.
8. Director - April Cook: Social Events / Food Service, Communications
 - Christmas
 - Valentine's Day
 - Scholarship Presentation Night
 - Park Day after Fish Fry
9. Director - Mark Frye: Programs - for meetings and Governor visits
10. Director - Mark Delaney: Communications
 - Emails to membership and reported to by, make sure members are being kept up to date
 - Work with: Face Book manager
 - Web site Manager
 - Newsletter writer
 - Photographer
 - School Liaison
11. Director - Mark Meyers / Noelle Czerniak: Marketing / Events
 - Serve on the Membership Committee and help use data collected to help the club market our events
12. Director - Bill Swint: Club Projects
 - Report to the Board about scholarships and other projects from those chairs
 - Coordinate with Committee: Oversight for Thanksgiving and Christmas activities
13. Service Chair - Cindy Crow: field service requests and service projects. Report to the Board (GAT)
 - Report to the Board Blood Drive, road-side clean up, Girls / Boys State, School Liaison, Park Clean-up, and other services
14. Membership Chair - Dick Holloway: Overall membership efforts (GAT)

Garden Ridge Lions Club Other Positions

Other areas to serve - Not required to attend board meetings:

Lion Tamer - Vic Rodriguez: Set up and equipment

Tail Twister - Jen Weber: instill enthusiasm and good fellowship in the meetings, and to keep harmony. She is empowered to impose, as well as collect, fines from the members

Leo Coordinator: Amanda Hagy: works with Leo Clubs

School Liaison- Contests, Nurses, Project Graduation (eye care needs, social workers)

Garden Ridge

Danville

Davenport

Private Schools

Scholarship Chair: Kerry Ledford - Head up the scholarship application, selection, and awards

Scholarship Committee: Laura Ochoa, Dave Heier, John McCaw, John Mitzel

Road-side clean-up Chair: Greg Loser: Coordinates at least four times a year the Bat Cave Road Clean up

Road-side Clean-up Crew: Dick Holloway, Jim Newbold, John Mitzel, Randy Maschek, Mandy Hagy

Holiday Committee: Works with Projects director on Thanksgiving and Christmas

Blood Drive Chair: Dick Holloway

Fundraising Committee:

Membership Chair: Dick Holloway

Membership Committee: Randy Maschek, Dave Heier, Mark Delaney, Al Haddad, Mandy Hagy, Mark Meyers, Jim Newbold - advisor

Face Book manager:

Website manager:

Newsletter - Kerry Ledford

Photographer - Josie Brestle

Sewing patches on banners:

Card writer (Birthday, Congratulations, Sympathy, etc.): Cammie Cannon

Hearing Testing Team: Go into schools and conduct hearing tests: Josie Brestle, Larry Steele

Lions Camp Liaison (Work day): Dick Holloway, Jim Newbold, John Mitzel

Work Day Crew:

Lion Camp (Scholarships):

Wood Cutting: Todd Arvidson, Walter Brown

Park Clean Up: Dave Heier

Community Relations: (Police, Fire, Mayor, City Council, Commissioner, etc.) notifications

Girls State / Boys State - John Mitzel

Eye Glass Recycling Program: Jim Newbold, Jim Anderson

Fish Fry - many options to serve. All are expected to do something.

Food/ Kitchen

Serving

Set up

Live Auction

Silence Auction- Dick Holloway, Frank Powers, Mandy Hagy



Founded by three Detroit area Lions Clubs members in 1939, Leader Dogs for the Blind provides dog guides to people who are blind or visually impaired to enhance their mobility, independence and quality of life. Each year, over 270 participants attend our 26- day residential training program to be paired with a dog guide. This is a life-changing event that opens the doors to independence, safety and self-worth for many of the participants in the Leader Dog program.



World Services for the Blind

Lions World Services for the Blind was founded in 1947 by Roy Kumpe to serve people who are blind and visually impaired who needed to learn independent living skills or job training skills that considered the special requirements of their individual visual impairments. The goal of the rehabilitation center then, and today, is to prepare the individual who is blind or visually impaired to function independently in our "sighted" society.



Lions Clubs International FOUNDATION

The Lions Club International Foundation provides funds for relief from disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and floods. It also provides funds to aid in construction of hospitals, clinics, schools and other needed projects.

Texas Lions Foundation

Since its founding nearly 37 years ago, our District 2-S3 has contributed \$239,000 to the Foundation. In that same time period, \$782,000 has been distributed to Texas Lions Clubs for Humanitarian Projects and Disaster Relief in Texas. Congratulations – YOU continue to make a difference in Texas! For the current Lions Year that began July 1, 2020, 41 Clubs in the District have already become 100% Clubs supporting the Foundation. If you have not made your 100% Club contribution, there is still ample time to do so. Contributions from the 41 Clubs totaled more than \$3,500 and qualify each Club to receive a recognition banner patch which would have been presented at the Mid-Winter Conference – the plan now is to present the banner patches at the District Convention on May 1, 2021.

How We Serve

There are 1.35 million Lion members in 45,000 clubs world-wide. We are active in more than 208 countries and geographic areas. We conduct vision and health screenings, build parks, support eye hospitals, award scholarships, assist youth, provide help in time of disaster, and much more.

A Brief History of Lions International

In June of 1917, the Melvin Jones Business Circle of Chicago contacted several similar organizations and held their first convention in August in Dallas, TX. The first International Lions Club was established in Windsor, Ontario, in 1920. In 1925, Helen Keller challenged the Lions to become the "Knights of the Blind." Lions Club International had its major expansion between 1950-1970. Women were admitted to become Lions in 1987.

History of the Garden Ridge Lions Club

A community-wide effort to help individuals and families in times of need or disaster has long been a characteristic of the rural Southwest. This willingness to assist neighbors in times of crisis seemed inherent to the early residents of the Garden Ridge community. The rapid development of the area during the early 1970's brought the realization that some type of formal organization was needed to grow with the community while also meeting their increased charitable and civic needs. This realization "planted the seed" and resulted in the founding of the Garden Ridge Lions Club in early 1972. Formal presentation of the Charter was made on April 25, 1973, at a banquet held at the Randolph Air Force Base Non-Commissioned Officers' Club.

Regional, State, and International Charities Supported Texas Lions Camp

The Texas Lions Camp is a 500-acre camp located in Kerrville, Texas, for physically handicapped, Down Syndrome, and insulin-dependent diabetic children. The camp was founded April 4, 1949, and had 40 excited kids for the first camp held on June 8, 1953. The first summer the camp served 236 children and now averages about 1300 per summer. The camping sessions offer the kids swimming, horseback riding, fishing, archery, and nature studies. All camping and services are provided at no cost to the children or their families. We spend three Saturdays every year, approximately 300 work hours, getting the Texas Lions Camp painted and cleaned-up for that year's campers.

How We Fund Our Programs

Primarily, we donate our time and talent to fund raising and local humanitarian projects. Our primary fund raising project is the Annual Fish Fry, BBQ, Raffle, and Auction held every year on the first Saturday in October at the Garden Ridge Community Center. Come out and support us!

The Garden Ridge Lions Club meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at the Garden Ridge Community and Event Center, 7400 Municipal Pkwy, Garden Ridge.

Garden Ridge Lions Charities, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) IRS tax exempt organization.

Local Humanitarian Programs of the Garden Ridge Lions Club

- Eyeglass Recycle – visit Garden Ridge library eyeglass recycle drop box
- Youth Scholarships – Local High School awardees receive a scholarship toward their college or vocational school education
- Boys State – Hands on experience in state political system
- Girls State – Hands on experience in state political system
- LEOs – Leo Clubs established to promote high school experience in Lions
- Project Graduation - Adult-supervised and alcohol-free activities are offered as part of a postgraduation party
- Lone Star Books – purchase of children books for our City Library
- Disaster Relief – as needed for local, state, national, and international disasters
- Thanksgiving Food Baskets – provide holiday food for local needy families
- Operation Santa Claus – provide holiday food and children gifts to local needy families
- Hearing Screening – annual hearing testing of grade school students in Comal and New Braunfels ISDs
- Bat Cave and FM 2252 Road Clean Up – provide quarterly trash cleanup of selected local roads
- Blood Donations - In conjunction with the City of Garden Ridge, coordinates quarterly blood drives
- Community Service - We support and participate in programs and service projects in our community

President's Corner

Dear Garden Ridge Lions,

With three in-person meetings under our belt, we are looking forward to continuing as we reinvigorate our Lions Club. Guest speakers have been top-notch thanks to Lion Mark Frye, and as we proceed into March – April we will get the GRCLC 2021 – 2022 BoD election completed on March 24th. With us on the 24th, Dr. Calvin Finch will talk about gardening post-2021 Texas ice-age. Seriously, Dr. Finch is a recognized horticultural expert and will be talking about gardening. Preparations for our 2021 GRCLC FFB&A will also be on the agenda. Then on April 14th, two speakers, Dr. Charles Johnson and Ms. Tori Howard, will discuss what I hope will become a new GRCLC volunteer activity – Emergency Response Team certification and participation.

As many are aware, our Wednesday meetings are combination in-person and virtual events. While the virtual format has had its challenges, we will continue covering the meeting to enable those unable to attend a way to participate. Food service has varied from pizza to the latest, a Mexican dinner that was the idea of Mandy Hagy with help from Ginger Stiehler. Mandy and Ginger were a hit, and the cost was so reasonable that the board is assessing future food service options. The ladies will return on March 24th. More to follow on the assessment.

Our 2021 Fish Fry Barbeque and Auction is also coming down the pike and we must start the planning this month to be ready for the "First Saturday in October." The first steps will be soliciting volunteers for all the subcommittees, and that will kick-off March 24th with the sign-up board being displayed at our Lions Club meeting. This year will still be a challenge given that COVID will still be with us in some form or fashion. We will have to be creative in our planning and what we will offer. For example, will our auction have to include a virtual component? Do we have to redesign our raffle ticket process? How will our food service be impacted, and will we be able to manage the number of diners inside the community center? We pray most COVID concerns will be mitigated, but Fortuna Favet Fortibus (for any Carrier Wing 14 alums) so we will boldly press forward.

Finally, I want to make a pitch for the 2021 Lions Club International Convention. It will be virtual this year and open to all Lions and Leos around the world. The convention is scheduled for June 25-29. Here is the registration link: <https://lcicon.lionsclubs.org/>

Gary Fuchs, our 2-S3 regional president, is pushing for maximum participation for two reasons. Since the convention is virtual this is an excellent opportunity for 2-S3 Lions and Leos to actually experience an LCI convention. More importantly, our district has a candidate for International Director, PCC T.J. Tijerina, and every vote 2-S3 clubs can muster will get him elected. Each club is allowed one vote, no matter what our membership count. However, 38 members registering gets us two votes, and if 63 members register, we get three votes (for math majors the formula is multiples of 25 + 13 for every one added vote increment).

The registration fee for the virtual convention is \$50 until March 31st, then \$75 beginning April 1. For Leos it will be \$30 regardless of date. We will talk more about this event, but sign up before the end of March to get the \$50 rate!

Thanks, Lion Bill F.

Lions Collect Used Eyeglasses

The members of the Garden Ridge Lions Club have accumulated, over the past several months, about 8000 pair of used eyeglasses. The club sorted and packed them for delivery to the Texas Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center (TLERC) in Midland, Texas. The TLERC program is in need of used eyeglasses; there are over 1.5 billion, that's billion with a "b," individuals in developing nations that need and can't afford the simplest eye care. We as Lions can do our part in filling this hole by collecting used eyeglasses for recycling. The center will process and distribute the used eyeglasses to needy individuals throughout the world. Once received at TLERC, glasses go through a "First Sort." Since people will not see clearly from severely scratched lenses, these must be sorted out. TLERC will also throw out very worn or broken frames as well. The rest of the first sort consists of separating glasses: prescription from non-prescription, clear from tinted lenses, baby/small child glasses from adult, and "fancy" frames, as well as those with precious metal in them from normal frames.

Finally, the glasses are separated by right eye prescription into single vision or bifocal, near or far-sighted, and then quarter diopters (a diopter is a measurement of the lens strength). Each of these sub-divisions is then placed into special boxes holding about 50 glasses of that prescription. A completed set of all the combinations ready to ship to a mission or clinic around the world would contain about 7600 pairs of glasses. In the end we might have to sort through 50,000 pair of glasses just to come up with one complete set of boxes to ship, because some prescriptions are harder to find than others. So please keep on collecting!

Community residents may deposit unneeded eyeglasses in the Garden Ridge Lions eyeglass collection box located in the Garden Ridge Library. The eyeglasses from our collection box provide improved vision not only for many people but also for our favorite teddy bear.



Newsletter Writer/Editor

Kerry Ledford is the writer/editor of this newsletter. Kerry is originally from Southern California, enlisted in the Air Force, and eventually got a commission as an Air Force Officer and served as a communications officer. He retired from the Air Force after 23 years and got a job with the U.S. Courts as a Computer Applications Trainer and technical writer. He trained federal judges and court employees, and retired from that in 2011. Since then he has been active in civic groups. He enjoys writing, and writes a newsletter for the Republican Club of Comal County and for Georg Ranch, the development in Garden Ridge where he lives. His wife teaches Latin at St. John Paul II Catholic High School.



TEXAS LIONS CAMP NEWS

Feb. 6 was historic as members of the camp board joined the Executive Committee for groundbreaking on Phase I of implementation of the new master plan. Following the meeting, attendees gathered on the site of the now demolished bunk house 2 for the groundbreaking ceremony. Finally, the board authorized offering TLC-4-families this summer as a way to have children with special medical needs and their families on campus this summer. With the leadership of President/CEO Stephen Mabry and his management team, a new program to use the facilities to strengthen the family unit and the relevancy of TLC as an organization to families with a special medical needs child is being developed to supplement last summer's TLC2U virtual camp which will be available to children whose families cannot schedule a time on campus. It is important to understand that TLC is unable to offer summer camp as we have known it under the current COVID environment. Registration will begin soon for summer camp, so check the website, www.lionscamp.com, frequently for updated information. Details for TLC 4-Families still must be finalized, but the general plan is to offer a shorter-length camping experience for the entire family with a mix of structured activities and free time. In compliance with social distancing requirements and the need to maintain "pods" of cohabiting people, family units will be housed separately in the 15 wings of the existing bunkhouses. This is an exciting opportunity for TLC to serve families who likely need a break during this pandemic. Finding a way to safely house small family units and conduct small group activities makes it possible to continue to serve children with special medical needs this summer. Several weeks will be available for families with a diabetic child. The board amended the construction plan approved in November to accelerate the construction of the Eagle Trail while constructing two of the Northern Quad larger bunkhouses. Eagle Trail will provide 12 self-contained one-room cabins, two-room cottages and three-room small group homes. This modification will facilitate serving small pods of people, and post-pandemic, will provide opportunities for housing medical and leadership staff during summer camp and for leasing for other purposes.

Garden Ridge Lions cleared a nature trail at Texas Lions Camp

My thanks to the below lions and family members who participated in our March 6 lions camp work day. We were able to clear brush for a new trail at the camp. We managed to clear a path 6 to 10 feet wide over a distance in excess of one mile over rocky and uneven terrain. Our primary means of brush removal was with chain saws manned by Randy Maschek and Jim Newbold. Once cut down the brush was stacked along the trail for future removal by the camp.

Well done by all.

Bill Foote, Steve Gallets, Mandy Hagy and Jon Hagy, Dick Holloway, Randy Maschek, Mark Meyers, Jim Newbold, and Larry Thompson

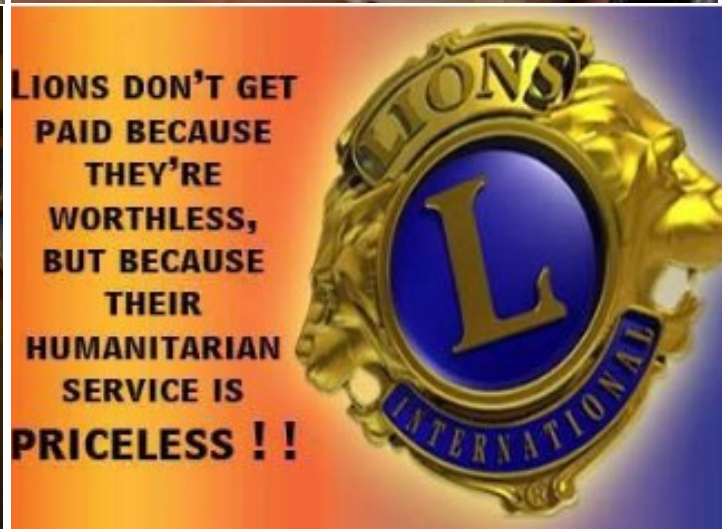


Garden Ridge Lions Perform Hearing Testing In Schools

In a typical year prior to COVID-19, the Garden Ridge Lions Club would conduct hearing screening in conjunction with the sight screening done by New Braunfels and Canyon Lake Noon Lions Clubs.

For example, in 2013, thirty-five Garden Ridge Lions and their family members performed hearing testing on students in selected grades in the Comal Independent School District, the New Braunfels Independent School District, and several private schools. The Hearing Testing and New Braunfels Lions Vision Testing programs were accomplished to meet State requirements. Hearing testing was done to determine if a student had a hearing problem that could affect their performance in school. The testing commenced in September and concluded in November and covered a total of 30 schools; we utilized a combined total of 115 certified testers (all Lions and Lions helpers) and screened nearly 6,000 students in both Comal and New Braunfels ISDs. The results of the hearing testing were forwarded to school nurses for evaluation and further action should the need exist. Historically, a small number of students (around 1 percent) are found to need further hearing evaluation and corrective treatment. This testing was designed to identify hearing problems at an early age and allow for corrective action at that time.

We are nearing the time to get our Lions back to work screening the youth of Comal County. Is this the year for you to get involved?



The MELVIN JONES FELLOWSHIP

The International Association of Lions Clubs began as the dream of Chicago businessman Melvin Jones in 1917. He believed that local business clubs should expand their horizons from purely professional concerns to the betterment of the world at large.

When Melvin Jones developed the concept of a community service organization, it is highly unlikely that his vision projected the scope of what is now Lions Club International: the world's largest service club organization with more than 42,000 clubs and 1.4 million members worldwide.

Nor is it likely that Melvin Jones imagined at that June 1917 meeting in Chicago that millions of dollars would be disbursed to all parts of the world through the association's charitable arm, Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF).

As a fitting tribute to the founder of Lions Club International, the foundation's highest commendation for humanitarian service is named in his honor - The Melvin Jones Fellowship. Created in 1973, the fellowship recognizes a commitment to humanitarian service. It is not an award in the tradition of Lions awards, but an honor given to individuals.

The commitment of Melvin Jones Fellows is demonstrated through acts of generosity, compassion, and concern for others. Thousands of lives have been dramatically touched because of what that commitment has done for them. The fellowship is best understood as an avenue for accomplishing a tremendous amount of good as donated funds are distributed to meet humanitarian needs in communities worldwide.

In the forty-eight-year history of the Garden Ridge Lions Club, only thirty-five members have received the Melvin Jones Fellow. They are Neil Craigmile, Glenn Morris, Bob Harmon, Chuck Elia, Doc Simpson, E.J. Fiedler, Bob Lee, Charlie Foss, Maurice Rouchon, John Curtis, Ray Welty, Reed Switzer, Russ Klingingsmith, Jim Newbold, Bill Harris, Jerry Bailey, Jay Feibelman, Frank Powers, Russ Sanders, Joe Britan, Dan Fordiani, Dick Holloway, Walter Brown, Clarence Dugie, Ed Bradshaw, Joe Hager, Greg Loser, Wayne Tyson, Randy Maschek, Mark Delaney, Harvey Bell, Jim Morgan, Carmen McCaw, Larry Steele and Dick Vogt.

Two members have received progressive (more than one) Melvin Jones Fellows: they are Chuck Elia and Jim Newbold.

A Recent Meeting

Here are some pictures that Mandy took of a recent Lions Club meeting.



Featured Lion Mark A. Delaney

Lion Mark A. Delaney was born in Brooklyn, New York, and attended St. Francis Xavier High School in Manhattan, a unique Military School founded in 1847 by the Jesuits. After graduating, Mark attended the College of Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, and at graduation, received a commission as an Air Force Lieutenant. He spent 1958-59 in Korea with a Matador missile unit, as a targets officer and as commander of a missile squadron. Lots of interesting experiences, including living with 35 others and two rats in a tin hut with no running water, and landing on an island beach north of the 38th parallel.

He returned to Florida with a missile unit, and then on to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, with a fighter squadron. This was followed by tours at headquarters, Tactical Air Command; Air Force representative on the staff of the Commander, Marine Air Forces Atlantic; Operations officer in Vietnam in an Army-led Intelligence Collection Division, liaison to the 5th Special Forces, and was credentialed by the American Embassy in Saigon to perform duties formerly done by an Air Force Attache.

Upon leaving Vietnam, Mark was assigned to Tokyo and the surrounding area for three years. Part of that period, he spent in the American Embassy in Manila as commander of a unit there. He then reported back to several positions at the Pentagon and with other agencies in the Washington, D.C., area before transferring to Germany for four years. He served there as Executive Assistant to both the Director and Deputy Director of Intelligence of the U.S. European Command, and as the Command's representative on an at-large materials committee in the United Kingdom.

The late seventies saw Mark in Colorado Springs, working inside of Cheyenne Mountain as Chief of the Threat and Intelligence Operations Center Divisions for the joint U.S. Air Defense Command, the binational North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), and the U.S. Air Force Space Command. Part of his tour was spent as NORAD's representative to the Canada-U.S. (CANUS) planning committee in Ottawa, Canada.

Mark then returned to Japan as Deputy Chief of Staff, Intelligence, 5th Air Force, responsible for Air Force intelligence activities in Japan and Korea. Concurrently, he served as Joint President of the U.S.-Japan Intelligence Subcommittee. He returned to Omaha in 1981 to take over the 1,500-person 544th Strategic Intelligence Wing, the largest intelligence production organization among the five services. He held that command position for three years, and retired from the Air Force in January, 1985.

Mark then served as Director of the Western Region of the United States for Grumman Data Systems, and later was a Director for Marconi and BAE Systems (formerly General Dynamics). In the latter role, he was responsible for a program at the SHAPE Technical Center in the Hague, the Netherlands; worked in Marconi facilities near London; and trained Japanese engineers in a Mitsubishi plant north of Nagoya. Mark retired as a Chief Project engineer from BAE Systems in 1999, and began the next day working as a consultant for nine years for that company.

Mark has also served in numerous volunteer positions. These include as the Vice President for Finance of the Boy Scouts of America-Pacific Region; on the board of directors for six national associations; and running community outreach programs for 2,500 teenagers in Las Vegas. Mark was a Lector and Lay Eucharistic Minister in various parishes around the world and set up support programs for orphanages in Korea and Vietnam. In Texas, he voluntarily served as President of Emergency Services District 6, President of the Garden Ridge Lions Club, served as a Fourth Degree Trustee in the Knights of Columbus, member of the Board of the Military Ministry, and received the Lions International Melvin Jones Fellow award for Dedicated Humanitarian Service. In 2019, the Quilts of Valor Foundation recognized him "as a Gesture from a Grateful Nation."

Mark's loving wife Rose passed away in November, 2018, after their 61 wonderful years of marriage. He has three children: Mark, a supervisor at one of Las Vegas' largest casinos; Steven, a managing attorney and owner of a law office in Nebraska; and Rosemary, a San Antonio Independent School District Specialist in English as a Second Language (ESL). His daughter Cathy, a gemologist in Denver, passed away in 2019. He has 15 grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.





The Garden Ridge Police Department is Planning the 2021 Citizen's Police Academy and We are Actively Seeking Students to Attend

This program is designed to help local residents better understand police work and offer insight into what happens behind the scenes at your Garden Ridge Police Department. Our objectives consist of strengthening relationships and communication between Garden Ridge residents and Garden Ridge Police Officers as well as aiding in crime prevention and public safety.

What Can You Expect During the Class?

Activities are designed and taught by subject matter experts – Both sworn Police Officers and civilians from your community.

Classes are normally held in a classroom environment with a few special activities held outdoors. Topics include:

- Spotting Suspicious People and Situations
- Search, Seizure and Arrest Procedures
- Use of Force, including deadly force
- Shooting at the Firearms Range (Optional)
- Traffic Law including Simulated Traffic Stops
- Working With K-9 Officers and Narcotics Interdiction
- REAL Crime Scene Investigation (Not TV Drama)
- Introduction to Tactical Medicine

Training supplies are provided – You need only bring a positive attitude and a willingness to engage with your community!

2021 GARDEN RIDGE CITIZEN'S POLICE ACADEMY

FREE to the Garden Ridge Community

One Night a Week

6pm – 9pm

Beginning April 6, 2021

(11 Nights Total)

To Apply Email Jill Wollenzin At

policeclerk@ci.garden-ridge.tx.us

Or Call (210) 651-6441



Hanson Aggregates – Servtex Quarry partners with area schools and cities for sixth annual Food Drive for RACAP

For many school-aged children in the area, summer is a time of hunger. That's because when school is out, many children don't have access to the regular, nutritious meals that schools provide.

For the sixth year in a row, Hanson Aggregates – Servtex Quarry is helping to ensure all children in the area have enough to eat by organizing its Food Drive for RACAP (Randolph Area Christian Assistance Program), taking place April 22 – May 3. RACAP is a Schertz-based food pantry serving portions of Guadalupe, Comal, and Bexar counties.

To meet the increased demand from families with school-aged children during the summer months, RACAP is asking for donations of 1-2 lb. bags of rice and dried beans, canned soups, canned pasta and meat, boxed meat helpers, ramen noodles, and other shelf-stable items.

Hanson Aggregates –Servtex Quarry is coordinating the food drive with help from other community partners. During the week of the food drive, food will be collected at city halls in Garden Ridge, Cibolo, Schertz, Selma, and Universal City, along with participating schools in these communities. Residents of these communities are asked to donate non-perishable food items at their local city hall, where Servtex Quarry will collect the food and deliver it to RACAP.

Last year, Servtex Quarry worked with area communities and schools to collect more than 9,600 pounds of food to help fill RACAP shelves.

RACAP relies solely on churches, businesses, and individuals to help stock its pantry and does not receive any government funding. Services provided to clients include food, rent assistance, and help with prescription medications and utilities.

Servtex Quarry, located in Garden Ridge, produces several million tons of crushed stone per year, which is used mainly for road, residential, and commercial construction in San Antonio, South and East Texas.

For more information or to learn how to help, please contact Hanson Aggregates – Servtex Quarry at (210) 658-7461.

2021 Election Information

The General City Election will be conducted with safety in mind.

All voting will be held at the Community Center to allow for social distancing. At this time, masks will be required.

There are other early voting locations in Comal County.

Check the city or county websites for more information.

The last day to register to vote for the city election is April 1.

The General Election is scheduled for Saturday, May 1.

Early Voting Schedule:

April 19, 20, and 21, 2021, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

April 22, 2021, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

April 23, 2021, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

April 24, 2021, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

April 26, 2021, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

April 27, 2021, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Election Day is Saturday, May 1, from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
at the Garden Ridge Community Center.

Candidates for Mayor of Garden Ridge

Larry Thompson, Incumbent

My wife Kanani and I moved to Garden Ridge and Georg Ranch fourteen years ago to settle down and raise a family. We fell in love with the community as soon as we saw it. Shortly after we moved in we began getting involved and contributing. I have served as your Mayor for the past four years (and Council member the two preceding) and I ask that you reelect me for another two years.

Service and volunteering define who I am. I proudly served our nation in the USAF for 25 years. I flew fighter aircraft in worldwide assignments and in combat missions in multiple conflicts. I served thousands of airmen as their commander and leader at multiple levels, never losing sight of the solemn responsibility of taking care of them as they were called upon to execute our Nation's missions. After retiring from the Air Force I've continued my service, now to our community. I have actively served on four non-profit boards supporting law enforcement, crime prevention, local services and charity, and children's support and advocacy. I'm an NRA Training Counselor/Instructor and have been the Refuse to Be A Victim volunteer instructor for the past six years to over 350 members of our community. All of this is about my sincere long-term commitment to our community and service to causes that are "bigger than me."

I have been blessed with life and professional experiences and opportunities that have helped prepare me for the position of Mayor. I graduated from the Virginia Military Institute with a Bachelor's in Civil Engineering and I hold two Master's degrees. As a USAF leader at multiple levels I learned the importance of servant leadership, accountability, organizational management, individual empowerment, loyalty, and hard work. I believe these and more have prepared me to help lead a dedicated city team to continue to produce results through proactive service improvements and process efficiencies we residents will enjoy for years to come. In my average 50 hours per week on the job, I've had ample opportunity to observe these enthusiastic individuals' efforts - I'm very proud of them and what we are accomplishing as a team.

As I ask for your support, I am aware there have been negative comments on social media regarding city actions and activities, and even about me personally. These comments have been further emboldened by the lack of a city (or my) response. By policy and law, I and your Council cannot engage on these sites. Therefore, please consider talking to me before you form an opinion based on these social media pronouncements. I sincerely believe that if we sit down and discuss your concerns, we will both better understand each other's challenges and concerns. Also, I always welcome the opportunity to share the great things our staff and volunteers have been doing to make our community a great place to live and raise our families. I hope that you will give me the opportunity to continue to serve you as your Mayor. Thank you.



Robb Erickson

I was born and raised in Salt Lake City, Utah, but moved to Garden Ridge as quickly as I could. I am a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, Class of 1991, and served proudly in the Air Force for 25 years. I continue to serve as a Simulator Instructor Pilot at Randolph AFB. I have been a student of Leadership my entire adult life and I will bring that Leadership experience to the City of Garden Ridge.

Prior to graduating from the Air Force Academy, I served as the Cadet Wing Commander (equivalent of Student Body President) during my Fall semester of 1990. After graduation, I went on to fly fighters for the Air Force and accumulated over 3000 flying hours in the F-15C and other aircraft during my years in a flight suit. Prior to my retirement from active duty in 2016 at Randolph Air Force Base, I served with many of you in our community both professionally and personally. During my years on active duty, I served in many locations, flew combat missions on numerous deployments, and commanded on multiple levels.

From 2017-2019, I served on the Garden Ridge City Council as Councilman Place 2. While on Council, I spearheaded two initiatives to better our Community: The "Families of Garden Ridge" Adopt-a-Highway Program along FM 2252 and the Garden Ridge Farmers Market.

The "Families of Garden Ridge" Adopt-a-Highway Program began in late 2018. Our responsibility is picking up trash and other roadside debris for the two-mile stretch of FM 2252 between FM 3009 and Marbach Lane. We pick up quarterly and I am proud to say that in our two years of existence, our volunteers have picked up over 250 bags of trash and logged more than 430 hours of Community Service. The success of the "Families of Garden Ridge" Program is due to the many residents of Garden Ridge who consistently volunteer to keep Garden Ridge Beautiful. Please read the Grapevine for details regarding volunteering for our next pick-up on Saturday, 24 April, from 8:00-10:00 a.m.

The Garden Ridge Farmers Market was an idea I presented to City Council back in early 2019. After attending markets in the surrounding area, I wanted to bring this unique community service to our City. I am proud to say that in less than two years, Garden Ridge Market Days has grown from 26 vendors at our first event in May of 2019 to well over 100+ every month. This success is shared with members of the City Staff as well as Councilwomen Lisa Swint and Kay Bower, who kept the idea alive after my tenure on Council ended.

My family and I are vested members of the local Community and the City. Both of my children attended Garden Ridge Elementary School and are proud products of Comal ISD. My daughter is currently a Freshman at Texas A&M at College Station studying Engineering, and my son is a Sophomore at Davenport High School. My wife of 25 years also continues to serve our great country as a member of the Texas Air National Guard.

You deserve elected officials who listen to your concerns as residents of Garden Ridge. I listened to your concerns from 2017-2019 and fought hard to ensure your voice was heard while on Council. I will continue to do so as your Mayor. We work for you and Your Voice Matters.

Very Respectfully, Robb Erickson

Campaign website: robbericksonforgardenridge.com



Candidates for Alderman (City Council Member), Place 2

Lisa Swint (incumbent)

Lisa Swint is currently serving on the Garden Ridge City Council. Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Lisa has lived in Garden Ridge for over eight years and loves both the natural beauty of the city and the kindness of its citizens. She is running for City Council again because she loves to serve and has a lot left on her to-do list. As an involved parent and experienced city volunteer, she represents a vibrant and optimistic voice in the community.

Lisa believes we desperately need an Emergency Management and Communication plan for the city. She also believes we need to find more active ways to solicit citizen input. She has pushed for the development of a Social Media plan and proactively consulted with a prominent Public Information Officer with her desire to better educate and inform the people. Lisa knows we need to strengthen our relationship with our county and state representatives - Garden Ridge matters. She has strong relationships with city staff, police department leadership, and Comal ISD management. She envisions a Council and city staff unencumbered by a single agenda and empowered to serve the community.

As a City Council Member, she was instrumental in growing the Garden Ridge Market Days event. The Market started at city hall with a few dozen vendors and has grown into the largest market in South Texas. She helped the Market Manager navigate the complexities of working with local government and supported her taking the Market private so it could successfully evolve into the asset it is today. She was involved in the development and approval of the 2252 sewer line project slated to bring light retail to the area as well as the Smart Meter project spearheaded by the water department. She also serves as Ex Officio for the Wildlife Management Advisory Commission.

She was invited to participate on the 2020 Comal Forward Committee by CISD Superintendent, Dr. Andrew Kim, and Executive Director of Communications, Steve Stanford. The Committee was formed to address growing enrollment in the elementary and middle schools and the challenges of funding future facilities. Lisa is also the acting President of the Davenport High School Theater Booster Club.

She previously served on the Parks Committee, was instrumental in the selection and installation of the new equipment at Paul Davis Park, and helped grow both the city's annual Tree Lighting event and the Fourth of July Celebration. She was a founding board member of the Friends of the Library and the Library Teen Advisory Board as well.

While a Board Member of the Children's Autoimmune Brain Disorder Association (CABDA), she visited with Texas legislators at the Capital advocating for children, her daughter included, with autoimmune encephalitis, with the end result of this advocacy being the passage of House Bill 2783.

Lisa and her husband, Todd Vagi, are partners in the North Park Audi dealership and are proud sponsors of the Tree Lighting, Fourth of July celebration, National Night Out, Garden Ridge Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association Car Show, and various programs at GRES, DHS, and Canyon High School. They have six kids, two dogs, a crested gecko, a house bunny, and are currently fostering another bunny for Alamo City House Rabbits. She has a BA in English and an MA in Counseling, and boundless energy for living life to its fullest.

David Wright

My name is Dave Wright and I humbly ask for your consideration and vote for Place Two on the Garden Ridge City Council.

My family and I moved to Schertz in 1998 when the Air Force assigned us to Randolph AFB. We expected to be in San Antonio for two or three years but somehow forgot to leave. We moved here in search of a house and found a home. After 18 years we decided to buy our forever home. Having lived nearby, it was an obvious and easy decision to become a resident of Garden Ridge, and we have been proud to call Garden Ridge home since the summer of 2017.

I enlisted in the Air Force in 1977, and as an Airman, was fortunate to be offered a chance to attend the US Air Force Academy. Upon graduation I became a pilot, flying multiple airplanes in worldwide operations. I have an MBA from Oklahoma City University. My extensive leadership opportunities while in the Air Force ranged from the small organization, 15-30 people, to my final job as Assistant Director of Operations and Logistics, supporting the annual training of 19,000 aircrew in 22 different types of aircraft. I retired from the Air Force after 27 years, and for the past 17 years I have been blessed to continue to live my dream job of flying, now as a Captain at a major US airline. I currently am serving as the Vice President of the Georg Ranch HOA.

I describe myself as a conservative. I believe government is there to support the people by giving them a hand up, and not just a hand out. I support equal opportunity, and believe the values of hard work and dedication are the foundation for what determines our outcomes. I believe it's irresponsible to pick and choose the laws you want to follow. I believe in both personal and fiscal responsibility. I pledge to not simply hear, but actually listen to your inputs. I pledge to be transparent and strive for not just more, but more meaningful communication. I pledge to use my analytical skills to spend your tax dollars efficiently. If you are looking for someone who is a politician, a local business owner, or a perfect person, I'm not your candidate. I am your average neighbor. I am your conservative choice.

I'm excited and optimistic about the future of our community, but also recognize the challenges we face moving forward such as infrastructure, traffic issues, growth along FM 2252, green space, and of course, our deer population. Growing as a city and maintaining our small-town atmosphere shouldn't be mutually exclusive. I believe that they can and should coexist.

Sometimes it takes a fresh set of eyes and a new perspective to ask the right questions. I want to be your fresh set of eyes. As your neighbor, I want to represent all points of view, and be your voice on local issues to help shape the future of Garden Ridge, while continuing to make our city "A Great Place to Live." For more information visit DaveTheWrightChoice.com

I respectfully ask that you come out and vote, even if it's not for me. I finish this letter the same as I started it, I will not disappoint and I will not let you down if you humble me with your vote for City Council. I respectfully ask for your vote. Dave



Candidates for Alderman (City Council Member), Place 3

Jesus (Jesse) Valdez (*running unopposed*)

Jesse and his wife, Linda, have lived in Garden Ridge for 12 years. Jesse and Linda both grew up in San Antonio and always planned to return to the San Antonio area for their retirement years.

Jesse retired from DuPont Chemical Company in 2014 after 38 years of service. He held various positions at the Victoria, TX, Plant from Engineer to Engineering Manager. Jesse transferred to DuPont's Corporate Operations in 2008 as a Program Manager based out of Wilmington, DE, supporting numerous manufacturing sites with the implementation of a Production System. Jesse was also an Adjunct Faculty Instructor at the University of Houston – Victoria, School of Business. After his retirement from DuPont, Jesse consulted with various Operational Excellence firms supporting blue chip manufacturing companies across the country to achieve operational and transactional excellence.

Jesse has experience in change management, project management, process improvement, strategic planning, maintenance reliability, process safety management, manufacturing and technology management, and plant operations.

Jesse has Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Houston at Victoria, TX. Jesse is registered Professional Engineer in the State of Texas (Inactive).

Jesse is currently serving the City of Garden Ridge as the Chair of City Water Commission; as a Commissioner on the Planning & Zoning Commission; and as a member of the Capital Improvements Advisory Committee. Jesse is an active member of the Garden Ridge Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association and is currently a Co-Chair of the Garden Ridge Annual Car Show. Jesse is a past Chair of the Georg Ranch Architectural Review Committee.

In Victoria, TX, Jesse served on the Board of Directors for the Victoria Chamber of Commerce; on the Board of Directors for Making the Grade World Scholars; on the Advisory Council for the School of Business - University of Houston at Victoria, and was a member of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce Minority Business Council. Jesse volunteered with Boy Scouts of Victoria serving as District Advancement Chairman, Troop Advancement Chairman, Pack Committee Chairman, and Cub Master.

Jesse's wife, Linda, is on the Garden Ridge Parks Committee, is an active member of the Garden Ridge Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association, the Comal County Master Gardeners, and is a Lindheimer Master Naturalist. Linda is a past member of the Georg Ranch POA Board of Directors.

Jesse and Linda's daughter, Lynette, son-in-law, Alex, and two granddaughters live in Dallas. They also have a grandson who lives in Rockport.

Jesse is committed to providing confident, dependable leadership to the residents of Garden Ridge.

Jesse will do his homework on issues and be responsive to concerns and criticisms. Jesse believes that fiscal responsibility starts with long-term planning. Jesse will be dedicated to maintaining our public safety and community values through collaboration with residents, business owners, community organizations, and city employees.