

FAMILY FOOTSTEPS



Est. 1982



PUBLISHED BY

Comal County Genealogy Society
P.O. Box 310160 New Braunfels, Texas 78131-0160
310190 0190

Volume XLII (42) #3

October 2025

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Greetings

Wow, the summer went by fast and the CCGS continued to be busy. The group had interesting activities with field trips to Conservation Plaza on June 3 and to the Kyle FamilySearch Center on July 16th. And as usual, the annual CCGS Picnic was held on September 9th.

In addition the board of directors was busy with several projects including: holding outreach events, helping with the reprint of the *New Braunfels: The First Founders* books, relocating CCGS storage, and digitizing the CCGS publications.

As Fall approaches, we will be picking up our meetings again with presentations on research software Goldie May and a presentation on Pre-emption and Homestead Grants in Texas.

You can read all about it inside.

As usual, if you have comments, suggestions, or material for publication, please let us know at suggestions@ccgstexas.org.

Previous Meetings

03 June Field Trip



Five CCGS members and four guests toured Conservation Plaza on June 3 for a summer field trip. Conservation Plaza is located at 1300 Church Hill Dr., New Braunfels, TX 78130. The Conservation Society's Executive Director, Martha

Rehler, gave the group a grand tour of the three and a half acre property. We learned how New Braunfels and Comal County historic buildings were moved and carefully reassembled on their designated spaces. Martha recalled the Herman Blank house was transported up the IH 35 access road in the southbound lane, heading north, at 6:30 am on a Sunday morning, as drivers honked at them that they were going the wrong way! A variety of structures tell the story of early New Braunfels, from the music studio, to the cabinet maker's shop, and the general store, Forke's.

There is an old garage containing a 1907 REO automobile, the first car licensed in the city. After the car was found in an old barn and donated to the Conservation Society, it took 10 years to restore it. Nearby is a "Sunday" house, so called because settlers who lived on farms would ride into town on the weekends to shop, visit, and attend church. The properties are nicely landscaped with native plants and antique roses. An arbor covers a long walkway where many weddings have taken place.



Standing L to R: Simone Hierholzer, Bernice Friesenhahn, Karla Friesenhahn, guest, guest, Lynn Thompson, guest. Sitting: Tommy Daum, and Alton Rahe
Image: S. Hierholzer



Alton Rahe pumping water in the Paul Jahn house kitchen

Image: L. Thompson

One of the most interesting buildings was the San Geronimo School. The interior has been designed to look like the Schmidt Hotel, which was located on the downtown plaza, across San Antonio St. from the courthouse. As you enter, there is a huge photo of the old hotel with props in front of the pictures such as a steamer trunk being hoisted up to the third floor (no elevators in those days!) Chairs, settees, and the registration desk give an idea of the hotel lobby. The show stopper is a reconstructed pipe organ, which at one time was at First Protestant Church. CCGS member Everett Fey and other helpers

painstakingly put the organ back together after learning that it was found in an old barn and was going to be thrown away. Local artist Darlene Phillips hand-painted the pipes for the organ in an elaborate silver, black, and gold design. She was able to recreate the original painting from faint images of it on some of the pipes.

Members who attended were Simone Hierholzer, Bernice Friesenhahn, Lynn Thompson, Tommy Daum, and Alton Rahe. Guests included Karla Friesenhan, Amy Galle, and several others who found our information on CCGS's Facebook page. - *Lynn Thompson*

16 July Field Trip



For the July Field Trip, the CCGS took a tour of the Kyle FamilySearch Center on July 16th. FamilySearch Centers offer complimentary access to computers, internet, and subscription family history websites. Visitors to FamilySearch Centers get special access to images of historical records that are only available in centers. The Kyle Family Search center is open to walk-ins every Wednesday from 9-noon or by appointment by calling or texting Steve at (512)587-1495. It is located between San Marcos and Kyle at 3751 Trail Ridge Pass, San Marcos, TX 78666.



Image: T. Daum



After the overview, the group was able to spend time on the FamilySearch computers.

Image: W. Voigt



Left to Right around the circle: Tommy Daum, Wendel Voigt, Tina LaFreniere, Emily Smith, Stephen Thompson, Verma Thompson, Simone Hierholzer, Vince Callier, Karla Friesenhahn, Bernice Friesenhahn

Image: W. Voigt



The Family Search Center is located at the back of the building.

Image: W. Voigt

04 August BoD Meeting

There was no general membership meeting in the month of August. The Board of Directors met to discuss a number of CCGS related topics.

09 September Picnic



The annual Comal County Genealogy Society Picnic was held at pavilion #16 in Landa Park starting at 6:00pm. CCGS provided drinks and BBQ & sides from Granzin's Bar-B-Q. The recent hot weather also took a break to make the picnic more comfortable for all.



Image: T. LaFreniere



Image: Simone Hierholzer



Image: T. LaFreniere



Image: Simone Hierholzer



Image: Simone Hierholzer



left to Right: Joe Grist, Susan Grist, Dorothy Schneider, Margie Dietert, Ceretta Daum, Tommy Daum, Lynn Thompson, Iton Rahe, Charlene Nolte, Jackie Nolte, Melissa Parma, Marlena Schlather, Chris Parma, Wilfred Schlather, ina LaFreniere, John Coers, Cindy Coers, Linda Reeh, Simone Hierholzer, Lloyd Reeh. *Image: T. LaFreniere*

Upcoming Meetings

14 October Meeting



Richard Miller, will be presenting “Genealogy research software Goldie May”. This will be a live demo of genealogy research software Goldie May (<https://www.goldiemay.com/>), which can help you stay organized, analyze what you find, and navigate more quickly to the right resources at the right time. Goldie May works with the websites you already use. It does NOT replace your genealogy programs. However, it might replace your spreadsheet, your notebook, the papers on your desk, and the sticky notes on your monitor—all the places where you track your research and sort out what you're finding. Keep the family tree you already have and see if Goldie May can add to it.



Richard K. Miller is the founder of genealogy research software Goldie May. He previously worked as a software engineer and executive at three genealogy companies. Now he's building Goldie May to help his own research and yours.

Ruth Foreman from the DNA Doe Project (<https://dnadooproject.org/>) and TV show “[Naming the Dead](#)” (filmed in New Braunfels) will join us briefly at our October meeting to tell us how we can volunteer.

11 November Meeting



Kevin Klaus from the Texas General Land Office (<https://www.glo.texas.gov/>) will present “Pre-emption and Homestead Grants in Texas”. Preemption grants were used by the Republic, and later the State of Texas in various ways from 1845 to 1856, and again from 1866 to 1898. Preemption grants allowed settlers to claim land on the vacant public domain of Texas and provided a process by which they could title the land once established criteria were met. Many times, these types of grants are an overlooked treasure trove full of great genealogical information! In many instances, they will tell you when a person settled upon the land, names of the original grantees and possibly their wives or what structures were on the land. You may find unique stories or history in these files such as murders, Indian troubles, or even an old marriage certificate. Kevin will cover all the aspects of these early grants, how to

search for them and what you may find.

Kevin Klaus is the team leader of the Archives and Records Program Area Research Room. A native Texan, born on the Texas coast and growing up in the Hill Country, early on he had an interest in Texas history. Beginning in 1990, he served eight years in the United States Army. In 1998 honorably discharged from the Army in New Mexico and returned home to Central Texas where he grew up. Kevin has a background in Anthropology, Archaeology, and Public History from the University of New Mexico. Over the last 24 years he has served as one of the lead researchers in the Texas General Land Office Archives and Records Program Area. During his time at the Land Office, he has searched the early Court of Claims files, German Collection, and archival collection to learn more about the history of Texas and discover the amazing collection of personal letters of early soldiers and pioneers who helped settle our great state.

09 December Meeting



The Comal County Genealogy Society will wrap up the year with the annual party and new officer installation. This is a potluck event, so please bring a food item (entree, sides, or dessert) to share with everyone. CCGS will provide plates, utensils, cups, and drinks. Feel free to discuss your recent genealogy successes.

January BoD Meeting

Only the Board of Directors will meet. There is no general membership meeting in the month of January.

News

New Braunfels: The First Founders Reprint

The definitive two volume set of *New Braunfels: The First Founders* by Everett Fey is out of print. There are no remaining original copies to be sold, and the publisher is no longer in business. The family of Everett Fey, the Sophienburg Archives, and the Comal County Genealogy Society (together the copyright owners) are collaboratively working to bring this classic into print again. CCGS members who have participated include Lynn Thompson, Tina LaFreniere, and Wendel Voigt. The following work has been done or planned to be done:

- ☒ An existing copy was sacrificed for scanning by having its binding removed.
- ☒ Both volumes have been scanned into PDF format (over 1000 pages!)
- ☒ Pictures used in the book were located in the Sophienburg and are to be scanned.
- ☐ The scanned pictures will be inserted into the PDF files. This will provide the best print picture quality.
- ☐ A new publisher/printer is being sought which can use the PDF files to produce the books.

Once a printer is selected, a definitive schedule and book price can then be set. It is hoped that the printer can then provide copies of the book "on demand" instead of needing to do a large (expensive) print run.

CCGS New Address

Due to a mixup at the postoffice, we have a new address:

Comal County Genealogy Society
P. O. Box 310190, New Braunfels, TX 78131-0190

CCGS Outreach events

CCGS participated in several community events.

- On April 12, CCGS had a booth at the Heritage Museum Texas Handmade Furniture Folkfest.
 - Members displaying publications and answering questions included Vince Callier, Tina & John LaFreniere, Lynn Thompson, Wilfred & Marlena Schlather, and Tommy Daum.
- On May 17, CCGS had a booth at the Vintage Oaks Market Days.
 - Vince Callier and Tina & John LaFreniere displayed several CCGS publications. A number of people stopped by, learned about the group, and in general talked about genealogy.
- On September 6th, CCGS had a booth at the Sophienburg's Fiesta Patria event.
 - Lynn Thompson, Wilfred & Marlena Schlather displayed several books written by our members, examples of family histories in the CCGS collection, and membership brochures.



Vince Callier
Images: V. Callier



Sophienburg Fiesta Patria Event

Image: L. Thompson

CCGS 2026 High School Scholarship

The Board of Directors has again approved providing a \$1000 scholarship to a local Comal County high school senior. This will be the second scholarship given by CCGS. The 2026 Scholarship committee consists of Wendel Voigt, Simone Hierholzer, Vince Callier, Chris Parma, and Lynne' Voigt.

Family Genealogies at the Sophienburg Archives

The Comal County Genealogy Society houses its entire research collection at the Sophienburg Museum & Archives. The reading room allows public access to these records.

A 1,200 book reference library contains materials focusing on the New Braunfels area as well as many references on the other counties in Texas. Additional reference materials include 19th Century county and church records; cemetery records; and ship passenger lists for Germans coming into Galveston. Researched and collected family genealogies number close to 500. A list of these genealogies can be found at <https://sophienburg.com/archives/genealogy/>.

CCGS Storage Space

For a number of years, the CCGS stored books and publications for sale, original documents needed to make additional publications, and miscellaneous items at the Frueholz Building at 324 Comal Ave. The CCGS was allowed to use the space for free. Recently the owner decided to rent out the space and asked the CCGS to vacate. Lynn Thompson and Vince Callier took the lead in preparing for and finding a new home for the CCGS. On July 5, the Board of Directors met at the storage area, prepared for the move, and acquired a new climate controlled storage space (5ft x 5ft). The actual move took place on July 9th with the help of professional movers (some of the boxes are very heavy!) To occupy the reduced space the following actions were taken:

- Extra copies of the Family Footsteps were recycled. (They have all been digitized.)
- Unsold publications were recycled. One copy of each or the original master was kept to be scanned for digital storage. New copies can be made from the digital copies.
- Some copies of publications were retained to distribute to local libraries to replace often used and worn copies.
- Pre-publication work-in-process documents no longer needed were recycled.
- Historical items like CCGS scrap books were given to the Sophienburg Archives for preservation.
- Hard bound books were retained.

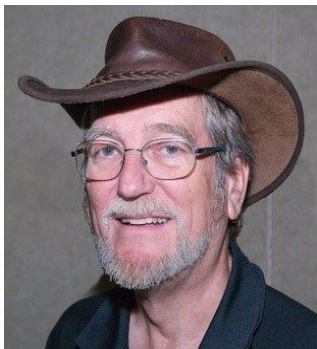
The CCGS Board of Directors will continue to monitor the space used and the cost associated with that space.

CCGS Digitization Project

The storage move showed the need to go digital where possible. The CCGS Board of Directors are in the process of digitizing all prior CCGS publications. To date, 33 publications have been scanned to PDF and OCR'd to make them searchable. They are also available for reprints if needed. The work is about 80% done, with only the Census books left to do. All prior Family Footsteps have already been digitized.

The Board of Directors are discussing what will be done with the publications after the project is completed. If you have suggestions, please let us know.

Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter



Dick Eastman provides an online genealogy newsletter at <https://eogn.com/>. Almost daily he publishes articles from across the U.S. and the world related to genealogy. Everything from new holdings at libraries to the latest murder cold cases that have been solved with genealogy DNA methods.

Dick Eastman has been writing his genealogy newsletter for 28 years.

He has been involved in genealogy for more than 37 years. He has worked in the computer industry for more than 50 years in hardware, software, and managerial positions.

By the early 1970s, Dick was already using a mainframe computer to enter his family data on punch cards. He built his first home computer, by wiring the circuit boards himself by hand, in 1980.

Subscriptions are optional but will provide more functionality on his website. Both free and paid subscriptions are available.

With a (FREE) Standard Edition subscription, you can read MOST of the pages on this website but cannot WRITE messages in the Discussion Forum or post comments to newsletter articles. In other words, you have READ-ONLY privileges.

With a (paid) Plus Edition subscription, you receive all of the above plus access to the (longer and more in-depth) Plus Edition news articles. You may select either a 3-month (\$5.95) or 12-month (\$19.95) Plus Edition subscription.

You can subscribe now at <https://eogn.com/page-18077> or at any later time.

There are also instructions on how to use Blogtrottr (<https://blogtrottr.com>) to get a daily digest of recently published articles at <https://eogn.com/page-18080/1333844>.

Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter articles are also part of the Comal County Genealogy Society's World Genealogy News page at <https://www.ccgstexas.org/world-genealogy-news/>.

Membership

Benefits of Membership

Your membership in the Comal County Genealogy Society provides:

- Meetings featuring guest presenters on a variety of genealogy-related topics.
- The September Picnic in Landa Park, which includes catered food.
- Access to the *Family Footsteps* published in February, June, and October.
- FREE access to the Sophienburg Archives with the CCGS' collection of local family histories and important research materials.
- Access to the CCGS computer at the Sophienburg Archives with Ancestry.com & Fold3.com subscriptions.
- Provides financial support for CCGS ongoing obligations as well as to our High School Scholarship program.

Members at the Prinz and Baron level will be recognized in the *Family Footsteps*.

Members at the Prinz level will have a research item donated to CCGS in their honor (with their name inscribed) and placed in the Research Room at the Sophienburg Archives.

New Members

Robin Skeen

Premium Members

Paul D. Startz - Prinz

Peggy Wunneburger - Prinz

Stephen Beisser - Baron

Remembering

Former Member Marylen Kroesche Dunk



Marylen Kroesche Dunk

November 30, 1922 - September 4, 2025

Marylen Kroesche Dunk went to be with her God on September 4, 2025, at the age of 102. She was born on November 30, 1922 (Thanksgiving Day), in Seguin, Texas, to Oscar and Isabel Kroesche. The family moved to San Antonio in 1929. Marylen graduated from St. Gerard's High School in 1940, and attended Draughon's Business College. She married the love of her life, Walter Dunk, on October 16, 1948, and they spent 42 happy years together. Marylen's greatest pride was their seven children and their families. While their children were growing up, she alternated being room mother for all of them at St. Leo's Catholic School. She was also a volunteer in the school library.

Marylen was a 5th-generation Texan, and was the family genealogist, writing biographies of her parents, father-in-law, husband, and her own autobiography. She was a member of the Comal County Genealogical Society. Marylen loved to write, keeping in touch with friends from the Philippine Islands, her husband's relatives in Germany and in the U.S., former teachers (School Sisters of Notre Dame), and many lifelong friends. She was instrumental in organizing St. Gerard's Alumni monthly luncheons for over 60 years. Marylen was a devout Catholic. Over the years, she was a member of St. John Neumann Catholic Church, the St. John Neumann Altar Guild, the St. John Neumann Women's Club, and the Cardinal Gibbons Literary Club of San Antonio.

Her family loved her dearly, and everyone always looked forward to their joyous gatherings at Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Her home would burst at the seams with her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. All were welcome. People just wanted to be around her. Marylen's lovely smile was contagious, and she never met a stranger. She gave the best hugs! She was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, daughter, sister, aunt, and friend. She will be missed by all who were blessed to have known and loved her.

Marylen is preceded in death by her parents; her husband; her sons, Gerard and Robert; daughter-in-law, Sylvia; and brothers, Oscar Kroesche, Jr., and Joseph Kroesche. She is survived by four sons, Walter Jr. (Rose), Dennis (Julia), Ronald (Cathy), and Stephen (Kathryn); daughter, Mary Elizabeth (Dean); daughter-in-law, Lavette; sister, Claire Beall; 18 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren; and numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.

The family would like to give special thanks to Fr. Alex Pereida, pastor of St. John Neumann Catholic Church, for his love, comfort, and counsel to our dear Mom and to our family during this difficult time. We are so grateful to all of the good people at Mystic Park Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and Bristol Hospice for their dedicated care over the last year and a half. We also thank the wonderful souls from the Prince of Peace Catholic Church nursing home ministry for praying the rosary with her and for bringing her the Holy Eucharist every Tuesday.

Pallbearers are Walter Dunk, Jr., Dennis Dunk, Ronald Dunk, Stephen Dunk, Jeremy Dunk (Gerard), and Brian Dunk (Robert). Honorary Pallbearers are her grandsons and her granddaughters. Visitation will be held at Sunset Funeral Home, 1701 Austin Hwy, San Antonio, TX 78218 on Sunday, September 21 at 5:00 pm, followed by recitation of the rosary at 7:00 pm. Mass of the Resurrection will be offered at St. John Neumann Catholic Church, 6680 Crestway Dr., San Antonio, TX 78239 on Monday, September 22 at 11:30 am. Interment will follow at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Edwin Stecher Endowment Fund at St. John Neumann Catholic Church.

2025 Calendar

Meetings are held at 7:00 P.M. on the second Tuesday of February, March, April, May, September, October, November and December. Unless indicated otherwise, all General Meetings are held at the

Emmie Seele Faust Building at the **Sophienburg Archives**, 401 W. Coll St., New Braunfels, Texas 78130.

New Members and Visitors are always welcome.



January	Board of Directors meeting only
February 11	General Meeting - Carlos Casteneda - "Genealogy DNA"
March 11	General Meeting - Andrea Burden - "The Salge Cemetery"
April 8	General Meeting - Angela Breidenbach - "Building Skills to Preserve Family History"
May 13	General Meeting - Mark Olsen - "Introduction to Family Tree Maker"
June 3	Field Trip - Conservation Plaza from 9:00am to Noon
16 July	Field Trip - Kyle FamilySearch Center 9:00am to Noon
August	Board of Directors meeting only
September 9	CCGS Picnic - 6:00pm to 9:00pm at Pavilion #16 in Landa Park
October 14	General Meeting - Richard Miller, owner of Goldiemay. Ruth Foreman, DNA Doe Project.
November 11	General Meeting - Kevin Klaus from the Texas General Land Office
December 9	New Officer Installation and Party

Organization

Purpose

The purpose of the Comal County Genealogy Society is to create, foster and maintain interest in history and genealogy and to work with other organizations to preserve historical & genealogical publications and records.

Board of Directors

Officers

Office	Officer
President	Wendel Voigt
Vice President	<i>vacant</i>
Treasurer	Simone Hierholzer
Secretary	Vince Callier
Past President	Lynn Thompson



Image: L. Voigt

2025 Officers and Directors (left to right)
Vince Callier, Secretary; **Lynn Thompson**, Director of Publications & Past-President; **Wendel Voigt**, President & Director of Footsteps; **Mary Simone Hierholzer**, Treasurer & Director of Membership; **Tommy Daum**, Director of Publicity; **Tina LaFreniere**, Director of Genealogy.

Directors

Director of...	Director
Footsteps	Wendel Voigt
Genealogy	Tina LaFreniere
Membership	Simone Hierholzer
Public Relations	Tommy Daum
Publications	Lynn Thompson

All Officers and Directors are members of the Board of Directors.

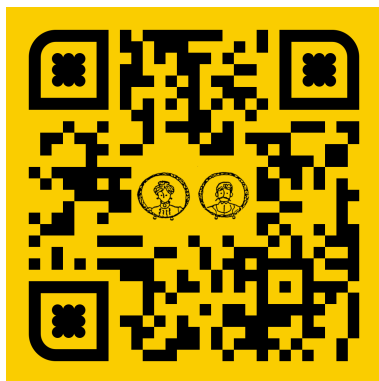
Committee Chairpersons

Welcome / Greeting	Marlena Schlather
Cemetery	Connie Krause
Archives/History	<i>vacant</i>
Library	Lynn Thompson
IT / Website	Wendel Voigt

Find Us on the Internet

Website

<https://ccgsTexas.org>



Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/CCGSTexas>



Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/ccgstexas/>



Footsteps Contributors

DIRECTOR OF FOOTSTEPS

Wendel Voigt

EDITOR

Wendel Voigt

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Vince Callier, Simone Hierholzer, Tina LaFreniere, Lynn Thompson

ATTENTION!

If you have an interesting poem, story, translation from a newspaper, or article about your ancestors, or your research has turned up something that you think is interesting, please consider sending it to us to publish in the "Footsteps." Persons submitting published materials will be listed as a contributing editor. The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions as necessary. Please make sure all submissions are either ready in rich text format or camera-ready. Please send your submission to footsteps@ccgstexas.org

Online Membership



After September 1st, you can renew your membership for 2026 by either filling out the Membership Application found at the end of this publication or you can go to <https://ccgstexas.org/membership> to renew online.

Membership Application

Comal County Genealogy Society

P. O. Box 310190, New Braunfels, TX 78131-0190

Name: _____
Family Members: _____
Street: _____ Phone: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip+4 _____
Maiden Name: _____ Email: _____

MEMBERSHIPS (January - December)

Individual: \$20.00 () New () Renewal

Family: \$25.00 () New () Renewal

Baron: \$50.00 () New () Renewal

Prinz:* \$100.00 () New () Renewal

*A Research item will be donated to CCGS in your honor (with your name inscribed) and placed in the Research Room at the Sophienburg Archives.

DONATIONS

CCGS Scholarship \$ _____

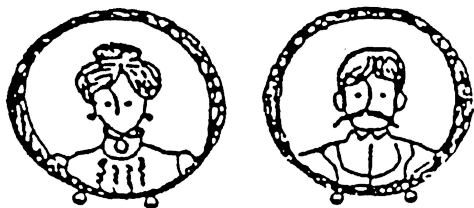
TOTAL Included \$ _____

Membership includes a subscription to "Family Footsteps" newsletter, free queries, use of the Research Room at the Sophienburg Archives, and interesting programs at our meetings. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday in the months of FEB, MAR, APR, MAY, SEP, OCT, NOV, and DEC. JUN and JUL are reserved for field trips to a local site and to sites in nearby counties. The SEP meeting is often a group picnic. (Board meetings are held in JAN and AUG.)

Meetings are held at the Sophienburg Archives, 401 West Coll St, New Braunfels, TX.

Please mail this application to the address given above and your check made payable to *Comal County Genealogy Society*.

I/We are researching the following surnames:



Comal County Genealogy Society
P. O. Box 310190
New Braunfels, TX 78131-0190

Postage needed
for mailing