



Community Gardens



Art of Recovery



Civic Engagement

May Newsletter 2026

Greeting Creators!

Spring has sprung here in Central Texas and we are abuzz with new growth and even enjoying some early harvests!

Please join us in celebrating our collective achievements and getting ready for our upcoming opportunities.

Our MAY CALENDAR



SIGN-UP 4 Events on [Eventbrite!](#) SCAN →

Space is limited! **FREE** to Members!

www.killeencreators.org



to become a Member **SCAN** →

MAY 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
COMMUNITY GARDENS – 10th St Garden - 701 N 10th Street  Kelly's Garden - 1410 Bundrant Drive Alvarez Garden - 408 N 18th Street					12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Quilting 4 A Cause! 4-6 OAR ~ Poetry Lab	9-11 Kelly's Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-4 Sewing	
3 Studio CLOSED	4 Studio CLOSED	5 9-11 Alvarez Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-2:30 Art Journaling 4-5:30 Recovery Group	6 11-12:30 Upcycle Art 12-4 Open Studio 5-6 ASCA (Zoom)	7 9-11 10th St Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Therapeutic Splatter Painting	8 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Crochet for a Cause! 4-6 OAR ~ Poetry Lab	9 9-11 Kelly's Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Sewing	
10 Studio CLOSED	11 Studio CLOSED	12 9-11 Alvarez Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-2:30 Art Journaling 4-5:30 Recovery Group	13 12-4 Open Studio 11-12:30 Upcycle Art	14 9-11 10th St Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Therapeutic Splatter Painting	15 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Quilting 4 A Cause! 4-6 OAR ~ Poetry Lab	16 9-11 Kelly's Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Jewelry Club	
17 Studio CLOSED	18 Studio CLOSED	19 9-11 Alvarez Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-2:30 Art Journaling 4-5:30 Recovery Group	20 11-12:30 Upcycle Art 12-4 Open Studios 5-6 ASCA (Zoom)	21 9-11 10th St Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Painting With Purpose	22 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Crochet Class 4-6 OAR ~ Poetry Lab	23 9-11 Kelly's Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Therapeutic Splatter Painting	
24 Studio CLOSED	25 Studio CLOSED	26 9-11 Alvarez Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-2:30 Paint Pouring 4-5:30 Recovery Group	27 11-12:30 Upcycle Art 12-4 Open Studios	28 9-11 10th St Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Painting With Purpose	29 12-4 Open Studio 1-3 Crochet Class 4-6 OAR ~ Poetry Lab	30 9-11 Kelly's Garden 12-4 Open Studio 1-3:30 Quilting Club	
OPEN STUDIO Bring your own project, OR use our materials to try something new without investing		WELLNESS CLASSES Gardening, Arts & Crafts, Wellness, - taught by members		GARDEN GATHERINGS Plant, tend, learn, and harvest from our community gardens - getting fresh air and exercise in great company!		SUPPORT GROUPS ASCA stands for Adult Survivors of Child Abuse. Email ASCA@killeencreators.org for more information or for the link.	
COMMUNITY EVENTS These are events that Killeen Creators are participating in.							

[Click here to SIGN-UP](#) for classes on our [Eventbrite](#) - 1st come 1st serve!

AmeriCorps Corner



Here's this month's fun joke from AmeriCorps!

What is a flower's favorite pickle?

Get the answer at the end of the newsletter.

Our AmeriCorps become like family.

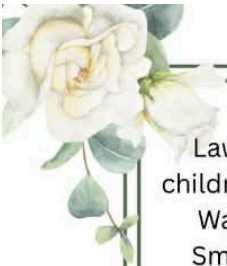
We spend many hours together every week, tending the gardens and serving the people of our community. Doing this work, we become pretty close, as we weather life's ups and downs together. And sometimes, life hits one of our members particularly hard.



This fall, our AmeriCorps, Vivian Leebrown, took a maternity leave to have her beautiful baby boy Lance. He was born 11/28/2025 (Black Friday) at Scott and white in Temple.



As can happen in life, this blessing was followed by one of life's greatest tragedies, the loss of her loving father, Lawrence Clayton Smith. Please join us in offering condolences to Viv and honoring her dear father's life.

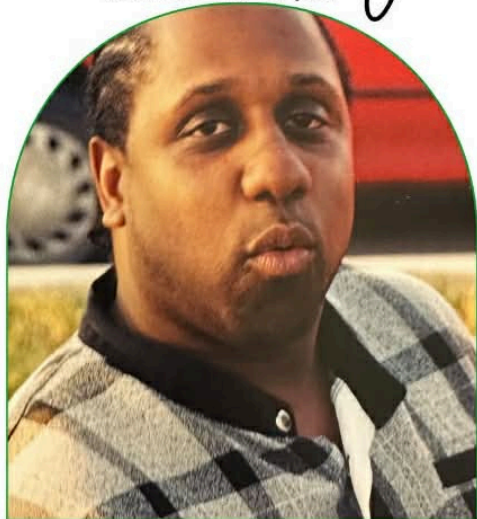


Lawrence is survived by his five children, Ana Smith-Curry, Lawrence Watkins, Jamie Smith, LeAndra Smith, and Vivian Leebrown. He cherished all twelve of his grandchildren, taking joy in their accomplishments, laughter, and the special moments they shared together. Lawrence's love for his family was at the heart of his life, and he leaves behind a legacy of kindness, guidance, and unwavering support.



Lamentations 3:22 (NIV):
"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail."

Celebrating
THE LIFE OF



Lawrence Clayton Smith

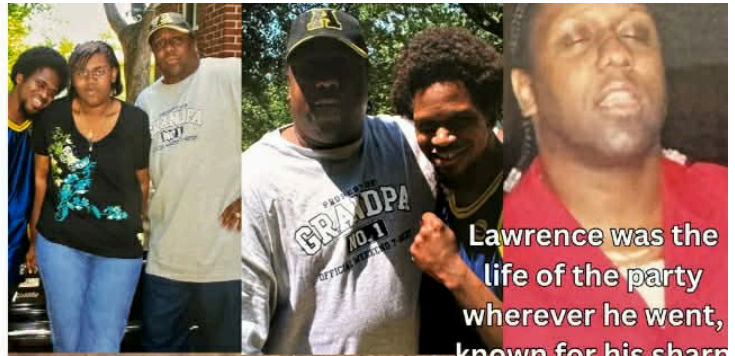
April 21st 1962- March 31st 2026

**Earthly Rest location
Central Texas State
Veterans Cemetary**

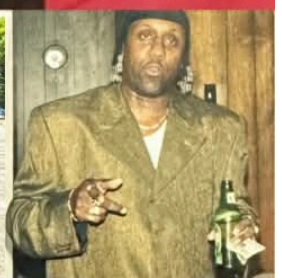




Lawrence proudly served in the United States Army from September 2, 1981, to July 31, 1997. He was a well-decorated combat engineer and achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant (SSG). His military career began in Boston, Massachusetts, and concluded at Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas. Lawrence's dedication, courage, and commitment to service were admired by all who served alongside him, and he carried the values of honor, discipline, and loyalty throughout his life.



Lawrence was the life of the party wherever he went, known for his sharp sense of humor and the joy he brought to every room. Always dressed in his signature suits, he carried himself with style, confidence, and pride.



Community Gardens

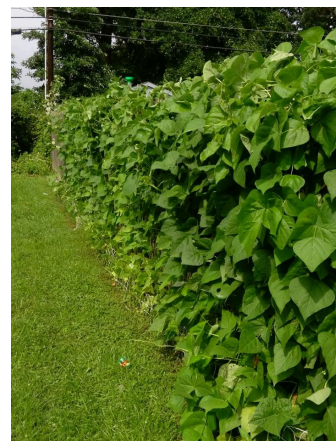
What Should We Do in Our Gardens in May?

What to Plant Right Now:

It's time to plant heat-tolerant crops but do this early in the month so they can get established before June. [The Natural Gardener in Austin](#) recommends the following be planted here in May:

Bush Beans, Okra, Pole Beans, Southern Peas, Cantaloupe Peppers (mature transplants), Corn, Sweet Potato slips, Cucumbers, Pumpkins, Edamame, Summer Squash, Eggplant, Winter Squash, Greens (warm season), Watermelon

It's also a good time to plant basil, rosemary, Mexican mint and lemongrass.



Tomatoes – Our Most Popular Garden Crop:

Are your tomatoes *determinate* or indeterminate? **Determinate** tomatoes grow to a certain height (generally in the 4-foot range), produce a bushy, low-maintenance plant that does not need to be pruned and provide an early-summer harvest. **Indeterminate** tomatoes absolutely must be caged or supported because they will keep growing until drought, heat or cold kill them. They produce over a longer season but are more susceptible to diseases as well as stress from heat and drought.

Google your particular plant variety to identify whether it is *determinate* or indeterminate. Generally, cherry or grape type tomatoes will be indeterminate, as well as all of the big “beefsteak” types. Paste tomatoes such as Romas are usually *determinate* varieties.

Beans Are a Snap to Grow:

Like tomatoes, **beans** have two varieties – either *bush* type (think of them as “*determinate*” because they don’t need any support) or pole type, which means you must provide them with a trellis, fence or something supportive upon which to climb.

Bush type beans are planted close together in rows. They produce only a couple of “flushes” of harvestable beans and then they are done for the year.

Pole type beans like Kentucky Wonders, certain varieties of Blue Lake, runner beans, asparagus beans, etc. absolutely must have a trellis, fence or taut suspended strings upon which to grow upwards. Pole beans are prolific and will keep producing throughout the season. They are a favorite among folks who can their beans because of the long harvest season.

Beans are easy to grow. Keep them watered, minimize the weed pressure and support the plants as needed.

Garden Management:

If you are a **smoker**, wash your hands very, very thoroughly before touching the plants of the nightshade family (*solanaceae*). Cigarette products leave a residue on your hands that can infect your plants with viruses which affect other nightshades. That plant family includes tobacco, tomatoes, potatoes (but not sweet potatoes), peppers, eggplant and tomatillos. These are the most common crops grown in American gardens so minimizing the risk of spreading viruses among them is critical.

Weeding your garden is important as weeds steal nutrition and critical moisture from your plants.

Mulching cuts down on weeds by blocking their access to sunlight while conserving moisture in the soil. Shredded paper, newspapers, packing paper, straw (not hay!), pine straw and compost are a few examples of mulch products. I use a layer of EZ Straw, a chopped straw product compressed into easy-to-manage bags. It’s available at Tractor Supply and sometimes at Ace Hardware or Walmart, etc.

Water Deeply, Not Frequently

I recommend doing a “digital moisture test” – stick your finger (or “digit”) about 2” down into the soil. If it feels dry, it’s time to water, but do it slowly and deeply. Then, do another test to make sure the soil is moist well below the surface.

~ Our board secretary & certified square foot garden instructor, **Lois Mauk**



What's In the garden to harvest NOW?

Everyone is **welcome** to come to all of our gardens to harvest what's ready. If you aren't sure what's ready you can ask an Americorps Member or Staff that is present!

What is available and ready varies day to day, season to season. Here are some of the vegetables and herbs that have been available in our gardens:

10th Street Garden: *carrots, lettuce, kale, collard greens, lemon balm, dill, sage, parsley, cilantro*

Alvarez Garden: *carrots, beets, Swiss chard, chocolate mint, lemon balm, sage, dill*

Kelly's Garden (bundrant): *Swiss chard, dill, kale, lettuce*

Coming Soon:

Green beans,

tomatoes,

okra, and squash!

Release and Rebuild: Splatter Paint - **NEW Class!**

This is a group that uses **expressive splatter painting** as a *non-verbal outlet* for **emotions**. This is helpful for anyone who is in any form of recovery or would benefit from non-verbal or low-verbal expression. This group is trauma informed, meaning in part: anything shared stays in the group, you may pause or step out at any time, and there is *no pressure* to perform or explain your art.

No art experience needed and there is no “right” or “wrong” way of creating *your masterpiece*.

Held the **first two Thursdays** of each month, 1–3 PM.

Get your ticket [here](#) on Eventbrite!

Painting with Purpose

Painting With Purpose is a welcoming, beginner-friendly art class where you can learn and grow creatively—no experience needed! Participants build foundational painting skills at a comfortable pace.



Held the **last two Thursdays** of each month, 1–3 PM, with two connected sessions that build on each other.

Hold your spot [here](#) on Eventbrite!

Therapeutic Art Journaling

Each week one of our Therapeutic Art Practitioners (*fancy title for Peer who has training in utilizing art and creativity in healing*) leads a session in therapeutic art journaling.

We have 52 weeks of prompts developed to guide participants through an art project that explores a concept or emotion with paint, pastels, writing and other creative mediums. Benefits include increased calm, increased insight, break from stress, increased connection and confidence.



KILLEEN CREATORS
WE GROW COMMUNITY

Therapeutic Art
Journaling



Operation
ART of Recovery

TUESDAYS 1-3 PM

701 N 10th St, Killeen, TX

Our **OAR Therapeutic Art Journaling** sessions are a space to explore creativity, healing, and connection through painting, mixed media and writing.

- Guided prompts - to spark reflection
- Share your words - only if you'd like
- Feedback - only by request

Led by Therapeutic Art Practitioners Kristin Wright and Mayci Hinkle these sessions build on our natural intuition to build confidence and clarity and self care.

Sign up here



Art Journaling

No art experience is required. All steps are optional. Supplies provided.

Get your ticket [here](#) on Eventbrite!

Seeds Of Recovery



KILLEEN CREATORS
WE GROW COMMUNITY

Seeds of Recovery

TUESDAYS 4–5:30 PM

701 N 10th St, Killeen, TX

Our **Seeds of Recovery** Peer Support Groups are a trauma-informed & inclusive re-imagining of the 12 Steps focused on harm reduction and growing upon strengths learned from lived experience and nature.

- Guided Curriculum to build recovery capital
- Co-facilitators to keep group safe and on track
- Opportunities to share and connect – as YOU choose

Sign up here



Seeds of Recovery

Led by Co-founder and Peer Support Recovery Professional Kristin Wright and co-facilitated by peers in recovery.

A member from Seeds of Recovery volunteered to share their story:

“This is a space for individuals to experience a no judgement zone no questioning zone. To cope with life on life’s terms without the use of alcoholic beverages or drugs. No 12 Step program, no NA program. Just checking in with each other as peers, keeping conversation between peers. Learning about myself with the least harmful approach. I have one year clean from drugs and alcohol. I am proud of my journey and how Seeds of Recovery has helped me.”

You can reserve a spot [here](#) on Eventbrite!

What is Recovery Capital? ~ A letter from our CEO & Founder

At Killeen Creators, we often talk about **recovery capital**—the internal and external resources that support our ability to heal, grow, and sustain wellness. It’s not just about getting through a difficult moment; it’s about building a life that can hold us, even when things are hard.

Recovery capital looks different for each of us, but we build it together.

Sometimes it's learning how the food we put into our bodies impacts how we feel. Sometimes it's discovering who we feel safe with—who we can lean on, who truly sees us, and who reminds us that we matter. It's practicing healthy ways to express emotions, to process trauma and grief, and to create meaning from our experiences.

In our gardens, in our studio, and in our peer support spaces, we teach each other these things every day—not through lectures, but through shared experience. We learn by doing, by creating, and by showing up alongside one another.

Recovery capital also lives in something simple, but profound: **being witnessed**. To be seen in your struggle, your growth, your creativity—and to offer that same presence to someone else—is a powerful form of healing.

As individuals, we build recovery capital step by step. As a community, we strengthen it by making sure no one has to build alone.

Because when we grow it together, it lasts.

—Kristin Wright, Peer Support Professional
Founder, CEO
Killeen Creators

Sharing Our Stories (S.O.S) - Taking a Break

We're always evolving the studio to better serve our community, and that growth sometimes means making space for new opportunities. While S.O.S will be taking a pause for now, we're excited for what's ahead—especially the launch of our new Thursday class (above), *Release and Rebuild: Splatter Paint!*

Civic Engagement

Mad Hatter 2026

We are grateful for everyone that showed up to our annual Mad Hatter Tea Party and Seedling Sale! We had an amazing turn out, celebrated our community and enjoyed everyone's company.

Please join us in thanking our **fabulous SPONSORS** and support them with your business and referrals!

Mad Hatter Tea Party

THANK YOU'S



SUPER VOLUNTEERS

John McPherson & Courtney Williams
Ellie Bocanegra
Comfort Adudekon
Dorothy Riles & Lauretta Matthews
SO many unhoused &/or court-ordered who have so much to give...



FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS

Kelly & Brian Flading
Kristin Wright & James McWilliams
Louie Minor
Ken Wilkerson
Clayton Tucker
Aya Eneli

SPONSORS

Rousseau Legal Services
Atomic&Ball
Fiber First
MoCal Painting
DJ Raven
My Tea Party
Nature Heals Collective
Central County Services
Miller Insurance
Debbie Nash King
Comfort Adedukon

&
**ALL Our Donors &
Sustaining Members!!!**

BOARD MEMBERS - Current

Kristin Wright, Chair
Tess Griffin, Vice Chair
Lois Mauk, Secretary
Brion Burdett, Treasurer
Sandra Blankeship
Rick Rousseau
Dr Mecka
Joshua Imonmium
Delise Coleman
Jessemy Hairford

TEACHING ARTISTS

Jutta Mack
Mary Ho
Brenda Atkinson
Perry Draper
Lori Brogton
Jeffrey Nagle
Connie Kirkpatrick

AMERICORPS - Past & Present

Miriam Manifest
Mayci Hinkle
Derrek MCilwain
Jesse Baez
Cristina Morales
Courtney Fisher

Richard Fletcher &
Miss Jackie Hewitt

VENDORS

DJ Raven
My Tea Party
Nature Heals Collective
Goddessaime Worldwide
Sue Pelletier Macrame
Jen Newby Gallery
Mayci Hinkle Art
Ash _____
Red Oak Treasures
Jose Mendoza
Characters By Christy
Bell County TX
Democratic Women



Here are a couple photos from the event, If you are interested in seeing how it turned out, please take a look at this [KDH video!](#)



Board Corner

Our board would like to thank everyone who has helped GROW our Gardens & Recovery Community over the past months - and years! From donated supplies, to extra hands in the garden or teaching a sewing class - EVERY donated penny and minute are treasures for those struggling with both.

To **help the work** of Killeen Creators in fostering **food security and Recovery from trauma, mental illness and addiction**, please consider becoming a **Sustaining Member** or a **1x donation**, and check out what you get!!!



BECOME A SUSTAINING MEMBER!




SCAN TO SUPPORT &
JOIN OUR COMMUNITY



SCAN TO SUPPORT &
JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

\$5 Sticker & Button

\$10  is a Tote Bag

\$15  is a Chicken
or a Bee 

\$20  is a Tee Shirt

\$25  T-Shirt &
Chicken 

\$50  Planter
& 1 of above

\$100  Planter &
ANY above

KilleenCreators.org

May JOKE Answer:

Daffo-dill



Our Team would like to thank all volunteers, sustaining members, and those supporting us in donations and spreading positive vibes!

We couldn't do it without help from all within this community.



Lots of Love,

Killeen Creators and AmeriCorps Team

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

To [unsubscribe from these emails](#).

You can also [view this email in your browser](#) and [manage your preferences](#).

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Outreach@KilleenCreators.org

254-213-2210

