MAY 2019 VOL. 2, NO. 5

Denton County Master Gardener Association



THE ROOT



Grow With Us



Buds From The Board

BY PAT MOYER, PRESIDENT

With just about everything up and sprouting, I think we can all agree that Spring is officially here. This is the time of year we all go nuts at our local nurseries. It's also when the Intern class is ready to be released from the classroom and spend more time practicing what they've been learning since late January.

If you've read this column in the past, you know I usually recount some of our recent activities and recognize MGers for their contributions. This month I'd like to look ahead at some new initiatives that the DCMGA Board is working towards this year. You might not see the direct effects of some of these activities, but we believe they are important to the functioning of DCMGA.

First up is the creation of a Librarian/Historian position. Some of you may be aware of the collection of books,

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Buds from the Board (Cont.)

scrapbooks, photos, and other DCMGA memorabilia in various locations in the Carroll Building. The Board wants to organize these collections and make them, particularly the books, available to all DCMGA members.

Another new initiative is what we are referring to as a "Project Manager Summit." The Board wants to provide all Project Managers (PMs) and potential PMs with a source of information on Board level support and information to hopefully make their projects more successful. We also want to use this as a forum to share successful practices and obtain feedback from PMs on what additional help they need.

The Board is also reviewing a number of our administrative policies and procedures with the thought that many of these need updating to support a larger organization. Some of these include attendance records, VMS reporting code refinement, and Member Skills Inventory. We would like to make these easier to understand and align them with the actual needs of the organization.

I bring these up because the scope of these activities requires more than just Board action. We will need the help of many MGers (and Interns) to help us make these initiatives successful. As these actions start to pick up momentum, you may hear of requests for assistance. Please consider these requests and help us make a better DCMGA.

Happy Gardening,

Pat Moyer

Remembering Our Roots 30th Anniversary

DCMGA participated in Coppell's Helping Hands Garden program to grow vegetables organically to help feed over 7000 families thru the Metrocrest Social Services Center in 2005.



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Tree Seedling Distribution

BY KATHY RAINEY

Master Gardeners and home gardeners alike know that trees create an ecosystem to provide habitat and food for birds and other animals, so it's no surprise that Denton County Master Gardeners Association would support efforts to increase the tree population in Denton County. Denton County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) has been selling affordable trees to residents for 30 years. DCMGA became involved under the guidance of former AgriLife agent John Cooper in 1995. Master Gardener Russell Tyson is our project leader; he works directly with the DCSWCD organizer to help make this event a success.

Photo Courtesy of DCMGA Member Steve Simpson

Russell Tyson, Project Leader

checks over an order at this year's

Tree Seedling Distribution.

The original purpose of the project was to provide local farms, ranches, residents, and landowners

with affordable trees that are both native and well adapted to this part of North Texas. At the time the program started, trees were harder to find at the big box stores and often ill-suited to our North Texas climate. The trees were promoted to improve wildlife habitat, provide visual blinds and wind breaks, provide soil erosion control, and most of all, improve property value. Originally, proceeds from the sale went to United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS). In recent years, the proceeds were used to fund the Cool Shade for the Third Grade project. Cool Shade is a huge DCMGA project that provides free trees to third graders in Lewisville ISD. Also provided are lessons on why trees are important to our environment and information on how to take care of the trees the student's take home. (Editor's Note: See *The Root*, Oct. 2018 issue, Page 11.)

DCSWCD coordinates with tree suppliers and puts together a list of trees and prices each year, usually in October. Flyers are mailed to the previous year's customers and distributed to other agencies like the AgriLife office and the local newspaper. DCMGA notifies its members, who then provide copies of the flyers at local events, such as the garden series classes held in local cities, to libraries, and to businesses from October thru February. The tree seedling distribution happens in a single day in February when DCSWCD collects the payments and Denton County Master Gardeners sort the trees, provide loading assistance, and provide planting advice to customers.

2019 Tree Seedling Distribution

DCMGA member Steve Simpson put together this YouTube montage of volunteers in action at this year's tree seedling distribution. Be sure to check it out and leave a comment if you like it.

https://youtu.be/x4LfwqgUB_Q

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Tree Seedling Distribution (Cont.)



Photo Courtesy of DCMGA Member Steve Simpson

2019 Distribution Team

Gretchen Niendorff (Intern), Kathi Fast (Veteran), Denise Jeppson (Veteran), Russell Tyson (Veteran), Jennifer Rentschlar (Intern), Lela Kahn (Intern), Pat Moyer (Veteran), and Karen Brown (Intern).

There are typically a dozen different species sold each year. A few favorite large native trees include Live Oaks, Shumard Red Oaks, and Bur Oaks. A couple of well adapted pine trees, such as the Afghanistan and Austrian Pines, are usually available. Some smaller ornamental species that can handle part shade, including Mexican Plum and Red Bud, are offered, along with the well adapted Vitex and Desert Willows for full sun. Of course, our Texas State tree, the native Pecan, is always offered. Other types of trees and large shrubs that are offered change from year to year to meet public demand and add some diversity. Catalpa, Aromatic Sumac, Rough-Leaved Dogwood, Italian Stone Pine, Pinyon Pines, Mexican White Oak, and Green Ash have made the list in recent years. All trees are young seedlings planted in either small conical or one-gallon containers, except pecans, which are bare root.

This year, a supply problem caused the list to arrive late and it only included eleven species. Despite the late notice, 708 trees were sold and sorted for sixty customers by eight Master Gardener volunteers. This was actually an increase from 2018 when 509 trees were sold to fifty-six customers and distributed by eight Master Gardener volunteers. Russell has been involved for five years and says we typically distribute twelve species, 600 to 800 trees, with the help eight to ten volunteers. In researching for this article, Russell found that from 1999-2008 there was an average distribution of 4000 trees per year. That's quite an impact!

Russell finds this project to be very rewarding, especially because we are helping provide affordable trees and perpetuating the DCMGA horticulture education on tree care to amazingly grateful customers. Customers thank us for making the purchase process quick and pickup process easy. Their orders are pre-sorted by volunteers who also help customers load the seedlings in their vehicles. Since most of the trees are young and dormant, customers need help just to identify their different trees. Many also need advice on planting and care of their trees. This one-on-one service provided by our volunteers goes above and beyond what the retail stores offer. Plus, despite the weather on



Tree Seedling Distribution (Cont.)

distribution day (sometimes snow, ice, or rain), every volunteer has a smile from either helping a customer who needed it or contributing to the planting of more trees for the benefit of our environment.

Russell typically recruits two or three veteran members that enjoy this event and have knowledge about the planting and care of trees. The remainder of the volunteer slots are offered to interns at the Volunteer Opportunity Fair that usually occurs a week or two before the distribution day. The event requires six to ten volunteers and the slots always fill within thirty minutes. If you have questions or would like to learn more about how to get involved in the project, you can contact Russell Tyson thru the VMS system.

Date change on the last session. Now June 4th. Mark your calendars!











Denton County Community Grove -1029 W. Rosemeade Pkwy., Carrollton, TX Free workshops for hobby fruit growers. Master Gardeners and Extension viticulturist Michael Cook will teach classes at the Denton County Community Grove, a demonstration orchard open to the public. Classes will be from 9 to 10 am in the Community room and then the participants will practice what they learned with a handson activity from 10 to noon.

JANUARY 31

- · How to Plant Trees
- · How to Prune Young. **Dormant Trees**

MARCH 22

Grapevine Planting and Pruning

- Grapevine Training
- Green Pruning
- · Fruit Thinning
- Disease & Insects

Please bring work gloves and water.

Also helpful, but not necessary: spades, hoes, rakes, hand trowels, pruning and lopping shears and pruning saws.





Contact Nikki Johnson at 940-349-2883 if you have any questions.





Save the Dates!

DCMGA Plant Sale May 4, 2019, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm (or until sold out)

Trinity United Methodist Church 633 Hobson Ln, Denton, TX





DCMGA Garden Tour

May 11, 2019 Tickets Available at dcmga.com Advanced Sale Ticket - \$10 Ticket Price Day of Tour - \$15

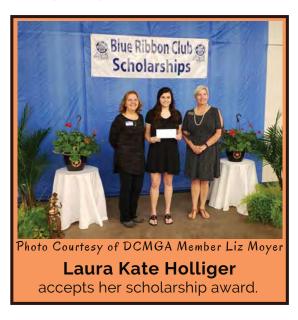
Blue Ribbon Scholarship Winners

Company Enables Scholarships

When Lynda Harvey was an employee at Intel, she knew they had a good retirement plan for her, but she just didn't know how good it could be for other people. As a retiree, Lynda now participates in the company's volunteer incentive program. Under this program, Intel makes a contribution to a nonprofit organization in proportion to the number of volunteer hours she contributes.

In 2018, Lynda earned \$2500 for DCMGA and directed it into the Blue Ribbon Scholarship program. Five students were granted \$500 each this year, thanks to Lynda and Intel. DCMGA member Lynda Harvey and Janet Laminack, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Horticulture Agent for Denton County, presented the awards this past March.

Laura Kate Holliger (pictured below left) is a senior at Aubrey HS with a 3.4 GPA. She plans to attend Dallas Baptist University to study Nursing. She is a member of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and has entered the Denton Youth Fair for three years in Baked Foods.



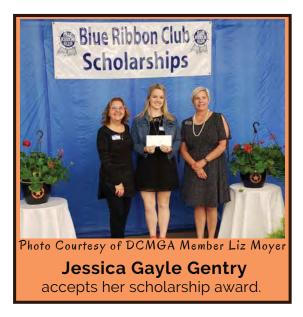


Kimberly Burns (pictured above right) is a senior at Pilot Point HS, graduating third in her class with a GPA of 3.96. She plans to attend Oklahoma State University to major in International Business. She earned Lone Star Future Farmers of America (FFA) Degree with 4 years in FFA and entered in the Youth Fair 2 years. She works at Texas Tulips Farm. She wants to research soil and water conservation, and plans to go to third world countries to help them establish their own agribusinesses.

Jessica Gayle Gentry (pictured next page, at left) is a senior at Guyer HS with a GPA of 3.27. She plans to major in Agriculture Education at Tarleton State University. She has been in FFA for 4 years and has the Lonestar FFA Degree. She has shown a lamb, a pig, entered Ag mechanics, and foods, and was a Denton Youth Fair Queen candidate. She helps her family raise and sell cutting horses.

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Blue Ribbon Scholarship Winners - Cont.





Victoria Clark (pictured above right) is a freshman at Texas A&M, studying General Engineering with a 3.769 GPA. She is a member of Women in Engineering. She plans to earn a degree in civil engineering with a minor in math, followed by a Masters Degree in Civil Engineering. She hopes to work in a large city doing infrastructure planning and investigate various sources of green energy.

(Matthew) Kyle Roth (pictured right) is a sophomore at Oklahoma State University with a 3.7 GPA majoring in Computer/Electrical Engineering. He is working with Engineers Without Borders designing water systems for Guatemala. He is also designing a ½ scale tractor as part of Cowboy Motor Sports to compete against other colleges. He wants to work at a computer company developing new technology after graduation.

Congratulations and best wishes to these worthy students.



Remembering Our Roots 30th Anniversary

The first Denton County Master Gardener training class had nine members.

Today, DCMGA has over 250 members and graduates 35-40

new members from training each year.

https://dcmga.com

Celebrating 30 Years: DCMGA Thanks Its Most Veteran Gardeners Joan Stanley, Class of 1994 BY GAY CAMPBELL

When it comes to plant identification, Joan Stanley's reputation precedes her. Although Joan has a wealth of horticultural knowledge, she humbly attributes her interest in plant-based research to a project initiated by John Cooper.

In collaboration with Keep Denton Beautiful (KDB), John hoped to create an arboretum in South Lakes Park. John envisioned the arboretum to be composed of local, native plants, and he personally tasked Joan to research and to determine which plants should be included. Before the Internet, research was a laborious task. Using resource books from the AgriLife Library, Joan spent a great deal of time on the project. Unfortunately, the arboretum never came to fruition, but Joan did assist in creating trails and signage for the park. In the process of plant selection, Joan also developed an appreciation for both research and native plants.



Photo courtesy of DCMGA Member Joan Stanley

Red Poppies Provide
a backdrop of color for Joan
Stanley's herb spiral garden, part
of her 'food forest' of edible plants.

Joan professes a love of natives, but also of succulents, irises, citrus trees, orchids, and others too numerous to name. "I'm a collector of plants more than a gardener," she says. "I want one of everything!"

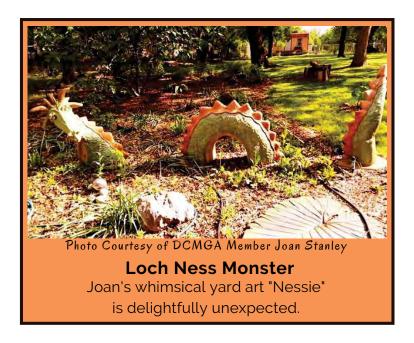
In addition to their home in North Texas, Joan and her husband, John, have owned and maintained two properties in Central Texas for many years. Last year, after John's retirement, they sold the North Texas house and moved to their spacious lot overlooking Lake Belton. The second property is just across the street and, although they rent out that home, Joan retains landscaping rights.

Landscaping a single property is daunting for many gardeners, but Joan makes the challenge of landscaping multiple properties look effortless. She has adapted to the rocky limestone terrain of Lake Belton with the goal of creating a visually-pleasing space in addition to a "food forest" full of edible plants. Joan's garden includes an herb spiral and a field of poppies and irises. It also features a dry riverbed xeriscaped with red yuccas, rosemary, agave, and several other drought-tolerant plants. The property across the street includes mature oaks, purple trailing lantana, a hugelkultur mound, and a whimsical focal point named "Nessie." Joan's yard art, a large orange and green Loch Ness Monster, is delightfully unexpected and sure to make visitors look twice. The properties also boast rose bushes, mature fig trees, and a fig orchard planted by Joan that showcases half a dozen unusual and hard-to-find varieties.

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Joan Stanley (Cont.)

With their son living less than an hour away in Pflugerville, it seems to have been a good move for John, Joan, the cats, and their two Corgies. When not gardening or reading, Joan loves traveling. The Stanley's recently returned from a vacation to Ireland. "It was beautiful," Joan says, "but there's just something about Scotland that we really love. I can't put my finger on the difference."



Joan is a Texas Master Naturalist and, although she retains her Honorary Life Membership with DCMGA, she recently joined the Bell County Master Gardeners. Joan seems to have few issues deciding which plants are best suited to Central Texas, but she is anxious to learn more about her new Master Gardener association. "Every group has its own personality," she says. One thing is for certain. Regardless of the group dynamics, the Bell County Master Gardener Association just got very lucky.

Garden Tour Tickets

This year's DCMGA Garden Tour will be Saturday, May 11. Tickets are available from DCMGA members, online at dcmga.com, and at select vendors in Denton County (Calloway's in Denton, Lewisville, and Flower Mound; Four Seasons; and Meador's).

New for this year:

- There will be a difference in ticket price for advance and day of tour sales (children 12 and under are free):
 - Advance sales will be \$10 each (both online and in-person sales)
 - Tickets purchased at the Garden tour will be \$15.
- Online sales will have a "will call" feature where purchasers will be asked to select the garden where they would like to pick up their ticket.

For more information on ticket sales & the tour, please visit the DCMGA website.

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Ample Harvest

Ample Harvest is a non-profit that helps gardeners know where food banks are located (and are able to accept fresh produce, as not all can) so that they can donate excess food from their gardens. Gary Oppenheimer, Founder and Executive Director of Ample Harvest, has attended several National Master Gardener meetings to inform gardeners of Ample Harvest's mission - matching need with excess.

If a gardener has excess food in their garden, they should know that there is a food pantry nearby in the Ample Harvest network that will eagerly accept it for distribution to hungry families.



Canva Stock Photo

Today, a quarter of all food pantries in America are accessible to gardeners through AmpleHarvest.org. Please reach out to Gary Oppenheimer directly at gary@AmpleHarvest.org with any questions.

W

We are on a treasure hunt for former members!

Were you a member of DCMGA anytime in the last 30 years, or do you know someone who was?

Are you interested in joining us for our big 30th anniversary celebration in August 2019?



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Please send your contact info to Shirley Manfredi at wilshirm@live.com.

https://dcmga.com

Field Trip to Bonton Farms Thursday, May 16, 2019

Meet 8:30 a.m. at the Flower Mound First Baptist Community Garden, 1901 Timbercreek Road, Flower Mound

This trip is limited to the first 55 people to register. We expect to return to FMFB around 1:30 p.m.

This outing includes three hours of AT!!



Canva Stock Photo

For more information on Bonton Farms, see www.bontonfarms.org.

The cost of this trip is \$20 to cover the bus rental and lunch. What a deal!

Lunch will be served at Bonton Farm. Reserve your seat and order your lunch using link in email sent 4/22.

Due to space constraints, there will be no private cars allowed. You must ride the bus — we'll have a sing-along! (just kidding)

Plant of the Month - Hummingbird Feeder Plants

Hummingbirds are here and those delightful, feisty beauties are hungry! To keep up the energy required to go from 0 to 60 mph in 3 feet takes lots of calories. A 170-pound man would have to burn 155,000 calories a day to equal what a hummingbird burns in a day! Hummers have to eat every 10 to 15 minutes during the day and then go into hibernation at night. Commonly seen in Denton County, ruby-throated hummingbirds, among others, migrate over vast distances to and from Mexico, flying nonstop across the Gulf of Mexico after they "bulk up" for the flight. Sugar from nectar is their main food source, but they also eat small spiders and insects caught in flight for protein.

Supplemental Feeders

Hummingbirds are important pollinators for tube-shaped flowers since pollen gets stuck to their heads when they dip deeply into a flower to feed. Hummingbirds are unique fliers with the ability to fly up, down, backward, and to hover in place. The feeders we put out should be considered supplemental food at most — and please don't add any colored dye to the food. It is actually detrimental



Photo Courtesy of DCMGA Member Christy Gonz Hodges

Esperanza or Yellow Bells Tecoma stans, a native Texas Super

Star, has the long, tubular flowers hummers prefer.

to the hummers! Water and sugar is all they need in a 4 to 5 to 1 ratio – 4 or 5 cups of boiled water to 1 cup of sugar, mix it up, cool, and serve to your guests. Never substitute honey or sugar substitutes for regular sugar – they cause bacterial and fungal threats to the birds.

Hummingbird Favorites

Natural nectar is preferred by hummingbirds. So, if you want to provide a steady supply of nectar for these high-energy delights, then add some of their favored plants to your garden. Hummers prefer long, tubular flowers they can stick their beaks and long tongues (which have straw-like tubes) into to suck the nectar out. Here are a few easily found options to ponder.

Esperanza, or Yellow Bells, (Tecoma stans) is a native, Texas Super Star plant. Denton County is positioned at its northernmost zone for cold hardiness. Take a little extra care protecting this beauty from really cold temperatures. It can be grown in a large container – I've hauled mine in and out of the dining area and garage for years! They are fast growing with bright yellow 2.5 inch flowers and shiny green foliage. Esperanza grows 3 to 6 feet tall and 3 to 4 feet wide. The plant tolerates summer heat and will bloom from spring through the hot summer and into fall. It is deciduous and sometimes develops long, woody seed pods in the fall. Periodic pruning will help it maintain a nice structure. It can be grown in full or partial sun and has a Firewise rating of 10, the highest fire-resistant rating. Esperanza is happy in any soil as long as it is well drained. Propagate Esperanza by cuttings or seed.

Hummingbird Feeder Plants (Cont.)

Flame Acanthus (Anisacanthus quadrifidus var. wrightii) is a drought tolerant, heat loving, native, perennial shrub that gets no more than 5 feet by 4 feet with red or orange blooms. It is perfect for hummers' beaks and tongues – so much so it is often called Hummingbird Bush! Another plus for gardeners is its bloom time – midsummer to frost. In very cold temperatures, Flame Acanthus can die back to its roots, but will reemerge in spring from the ground. It is late to leaf out in spring, so be patient, and can be pruned or even severely cut back in the early spring before leaf-out.

Flame Acanthus adapts well to sunny, well-drained sites and is a good choice for places with poor soil and reflected heat sources, like sidewalks and driveways. Supplemental water encourages flowering in the hottest times. The leaves are small and thin, allowing the blooms to really show off. Flame acanthus works well as a border plant or informal hedge and as a specimen plant. It has pale bark, so even without its leaves and blooms it can add interest to your garden if placed in front of a dark background.

Honeysuckles

All honeysuckles will attract hummingbirds, whether a vine or a bush. Lonicera Albiflora, White Bush Honeysuckle, is a native of the Hill Country and North Texas. It is non-aggressive and usually grows as a 4 feet tall deciduous bush with white flowers and vine-y branches that can reach up to 10 feet. The white flowers are followed by clusters of orange-red berries in the fall which attract birds. Plant this honeysuckle in partial sun, where it can climb walls, columns, trellises, and fences. It, too, has high heat tolerance, but low water requirements, and adapts to many types of soil. The easiest way to propagate bush honeysuckle is by soft or semihard wood cuttings taken in late summer to fall. Seeds collected in late summer to early fall from ripe berries need to be cleaned immediately and must be stratified for two to three months.



Photo Courtesy of Pete Gregoire [CC BY 2.0 (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0)]

All Honeysuckles Attract hummingbirds, whether a vine or a bush.

Threadleaf Giant Hyssop (Agastache rupestris), often called Hummingbird Mint, is a xeriscapic, perennial which hummingbirds love. It is cold hardy for our area and heat and drought tolerant, in addition to being deer and rabbit resistant. In the Mint family, it's a good self-seeder and will naturalize. Like many drought tolerant plants, Threadleaf Giant Hyssop has gray-green foliage. The unusual, fragrant orange or pink flowers have lavender calyxes which bloom from late spring through to fall. You may find Threadleaf Giant Hyssop labeled as Sunset Hyssop because of its colorful flowers. Cut it back in late summer to encourage the fall rebloom. It grows 36 to 42 inches high and 18 inches wide in full sun to partial shade, with very little water. If you plant it in a large pot – 3 gallon or larger – be sure to give it excellent drainage. This plant does not like wet feet! It will need repotting every two to three years.

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Hummingbird Feeder Plants (Cont.)

There are many other plants with tube-like flowers which attract hummingbirds. Some of these include Turk's cap (Malaviscus drumondii), which thrives in sun or shade, Scarlet Beebalm (Monarda didyma), Bergamot (Monarda fistulosa), Mealy Blue Sage (Salvia farinacea), Snapdragons, which are great for those early arriving hummers, Desert Willow (Chilopsis linearis), Coral Honeysuckle (Lonicera sempervirens – look for the Latin name so you don't end up with the highly aggressive Japanese honeysuckle), and Penstemons. The resources below provide more options for your landscape.

Resources

"Hummingbirds," *Texas Parks & Wildlife* https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/nonpwdpubs/introducing_birds/hummingbirds/

Aggie Horticulture, Texas A&M AgriLife

"Esperanza, Yellow Bells, Hardy Yellow Trumpet, Trumpet-flower, Yellow Elder"

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamentals/nativeshrubs/tecomastans.htm

"Flame Acanthus, Wright Anisacanth, Hummingbird Bush, Muicle"

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamentals/nativeshrubs/anisacanthusquadrifid.htm "Mealy Blue Sage"

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wildseed/mealybluesage.html

"Coral honeysuckle is the perfect vine for landscapes," *Native Plant Society of Texas* https://npsot.org/wp/story/2010/1252/

"Hummingbird Flowers - The Best 18 Plant Families for Natural Nectar," *The Hummingbird Society* https://www.hummingbirdsociety.org/hummingbird-flowers/

"Sunset Hyssop," The National Gardening Association Plants Database https://garden.org/plants/view/75156/Sunset-Hyssop-Agastache-rupestris/

"Sage, Mealy Blue," *Texas SmartScape* http://www.txsmartscape.com/plant-search/plant-details.php?id=377

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Plant Database

"Anisacanthus quadrifidus ar. wrightii"

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=anquw

"Lonicera albiflora"

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=loal

Earth-Kind Landscaping
"Yellow Bells or Esperanza"

http://ekps.tamu.edu/details?id=385

"Firewise Index Explanation"

http://ekps.tamu.edu/firewiseindexexplanation

Editor's Note: This article
was edited for size. For
more Hummingbird
Feeder Plants information,
visit the DCMGA website.
You can read the complete
article under "Gardening in
North Texas - Assorted
Gardening Topics."

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2019 DCMGA Plant Sale

Saturday, May 4, 2019

9 am - 2 pm or until sellout! Trinity United Methodist Church 633 Hobson Lane, Denton



- Great selection of ground covers, bedding plants, and "Super Spreaders"
- Texas Superstars®
- Texas native plants, plants for pollinators, tough-as-nails perennials, and no-fuss roses
- Special container plants
- Pass-along plants from Master Gardeners' own gardens
- We are pleased to welcome back Stan Poole, who builds and sells Adirondack furniture, chairs, gliders, swings, and potting tables.

Master Gardeners will be available to help you make your selections and answer your gardening questions

RAIN or SHINE

Sale hours are 9 A.M. to 2 P.M., but the most exciting items will go fast, so shop early!

If you have them, bring your own wagons or carts so you can take home as many of these wonderful plants as your garden can hold.

Compost Your Way To A Successful Garden

BY BARBARA BROWN

Many North Texas would-be gardeners are stuck with soil that severely challenges growing plants. Builders often add almost sterile topsoil to new homes, native soils may contain heavy clay that chokes off nutrition availability, and beneath the soil is alkaline caliche. One product helps mitigate all these challenges: lots of decomposed organic material, that is compost, integrated into your soil.

How to Make Compost

The good news is that nature creates compost automatically. Materials grown in the earth will eventually become compost. However, this natural process takes a long time—one to two years. Implementing a home composting system can speed up the decomposition process. Depending on the amount of raw materials you want to compost,



Photo Courtesy of DCMGA Member Barbara Brown

Plants Need Soil

that is rich with decomposed organic material to reach their full potential.

you can choose to build a set of composting bins made of wood or cinder block, create a wire mesh enclosure to hold yard and food waste, or invest in a manufactured composting bin or tumbler.

The best area for establishing a composting site is on bare ground so that composting organisms have contact with both soil and atmosphere. The pile should not be placed in direct sunlight that can be hostile to micro-organisms. Too much rain or standing water makes the compost pile too wet and causes it to become anaerobic. Choose a convenient location to allow easy access for turning and moistening.

A regularly maintained pile with a proper mixture of ingredients and moisture will successfully decompose organic materials. Composting happens more quickly if the pile is turned once or twice a week, usually with a pitchfork. A pile should be moist, but not sopping wet—think of a damp sponge that when squeezed releases just a few drops.

Under proper conditions, a composting pile will heat to a temperature of 70° to 100° as energy is released by bacteria breaking down raw materials. For more rapid decomposition, killing weed-seeds and bacteria, a pile requires a hot temperature—about 140° Fahrenheit. To achieve a high temperature, a pile should be fairly large, the ingredients added all at once, and the pile turned frequently.

What to Put Into Your Composting System?

Adding the right ingredient mix is the secret to making a compost pile work for you. Composting professionals talk about green and brown ingredients. "Greens" provide nitrogen while "browns" add carbon. A simplified recipe is equal proportions by weight or 2/3 brown to 1/3 green by volume. Do NOT

https://dcmga.com/

Compost Your Way To A Successful Garden (Cont.)

put meat, fats, dairy products, diseased plants, or pet feces into your pile. Manure from cows and horses may be added as long as the animals have not been fed hay treated with persistent herbicides (see Resources).

If greater precision is desired, online software will help assess the carbon to nitrogen ratio (C:N) for each ingredient type and amount being added. Quantities can then be adjusted to reach the desired ratio of 30 (carbon) to 1 (nitrogen) or 30:1. (See Resources for a Compost Calculator).

Examples of Green Ingredients:

Fruit and veggie scraps

Egg shells

Tea bags, tea leaves

Fresh green grass clippings and plant trimmings (grown without pesticides or weed killers)

Garden refuse

Green grass clippings

Coffee grounds

Examples of Brown Ingredients:

Chopped dry leaves, dried grass clippings

Wood shavings or sawdust

Straw

Nuts and shells

Untreated coffee paper filters

Pinecones, pine needles—chopped

Shredded newspaper and other paper products

Twigs

Peanut shells

When is Compost Ready to Use?

The final stage of composting is called curing the pile. During this time, the pile cools down to ambient temperature and does not require turning or added moisture. The size of the pile should be one-half to one-third of its original size. This may take a couple months or the pile can be left unattended for several months before mixing into your garden soil. You will not be able to recognize most of the original materials in your finished pile and what remains should be dark and crumbly. The smell should be slightly sweet. You may choose to screen out of the compost the stubborn ingredients



Photo Courtesy of normanack via Flickr (CC BY)https://www.flickr.com/photos/29278394@N00/2457055952

Finished Compost Feeds Plants naturally and helps the environment by reducing the need for chemical additives.

Compost Your Way To A Successful Garden (Cont.)

like egg shells, corn cobs, and wood chips that did not fully decompose, but that is not essential. When the compost is ready to use, mix it into the soil about 6 inches deep to provide nutrition for plant roots.

Troubleshooting Your Composting System

The City of Lewisville Environmental Programs Office offers the following guide to ensure that your compost pile is working right:

- A bad odor means the pile is not getting enough air; turn the pile with a pitchfork.
- The center of the pile is dry; add moisture and turn the pile.
- Decomposition is not happening although the pile smells fine; add more nitrogen ingredients.
- The pile is damp only in the middle; add more material and moisten outside.

Resources

EarthKind® Landscaping, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

"Composting Fundamentals—Raw material quantity and composition"

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/landscape/dont-bag-it/chapter-2-composting-fundamentals/

"Composting Structures"

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/landscape/dont-bag-it/chapter-3-composting-structures/

"Herbicide Carryover in Hay, Manure, Compost, and Grass Clippings," North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service

https://lee.ces.ncsu.edu/2016/03/herbicide-carryover-in-hay-manure-compost-and-grass-clippings/

 $\label{lem:compost} \begin{tabular}{ll} ``Compost C: N \ calculator, ``Cornell \ Composting \ Science \& Engineering, \ Cornell \ University \ http://compost.css.cornell.edu/download.html \end{tabular}$

Did You Know?

DCMGA 30th Anniversary Fun Facts

DCMGA partnered with Boy Scouts to establish and maintain outdoor living areas at the Fairhaven and Fair Oaks Senior Independent Living Centers in Denton in 2008. We continue to provide maintenance and support to the residents at Fair Oaks to the present day.



DCMGA Receive Multiple Best Wishes

DCMGA was very pleased to receive a Certificate of Recognition in honor of our thirty years of service from the Texas State Senate, office of The Honorable Jane Nelson.



DCMGA Receive Multiple Best Wishes (Cont.)

DCMGA Secretary Kim Shaneyfeldt, long-time veteran Gresha Leamon, and John Ankeny receive a proclamation of congratulations from Argyle Mayor Donald Moser.



Bill Heidemann, Mayor of Corinth, presents a proclamation congratulating Denton County Master Gardeners Association on our 30 years of service to Denton County to Carolyn Gold - Life Member. She was accompanied by Katherine Woodward, Lois Heckart, Carol Hardwick, and Karen Gibson.



Five Fathers of Texas Horticulture BY SHIRLEY MANFREDI

Ferdinand Jacob Lindheimer

The "Father of Texas Botany" was born in Germany in 1801. He was forced by the repressive authorities there to leave his post as a university professor and come to the United States. Upon hearing of the war between Texas and Mexico, he came to Texas and arrived the day after Texas won the battle at San Jacinto. Lindheimer was hired by various institutions to travel the state and collect and catalog plants. He roamed Texas for many years, taking with him only a horse, a cart, and two hunting dogs. Indians left him alone to do his work and sometimes even protected him, perhaps thinking he was a medicine man. In 1844, Lindheimer moved to New Braunfels and lived with the other German immigrants who settled that town. His restored home and some of his belongings can be seen in the older section of New Braunfels.

Segment two of five. Originally published in the May 2000 Roto-Teller (DCMGA newsletter).

Remembering Our Roots 30th Anniversary

DCMGA worked with 5th grade teachers and PTA members to install an outdoor learning lab at Argyle Hilltop Elementary School. This project was the winner of the 2007 State Master Gardener Project Award.

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Are you an Obsessed Gardener?

Here's how to tell if you are Normal or Obsessed:

N: You won't leave town when your tulips are in bloom..

O: or your daffodils, your lilacs, your wisteria, your

roses, your clematis, your lilies, your hydrangea......

N: You have a compost heap.

O: You take its temperature every day.

N: You would never kill a ladybug.

O: You bring them inside in the winter.

N: You have dirt under your fingernails.

O: What fingernails?

N: You love gardening more than anything...

O: ...and you hate gardening more than anything

and

you suffer from PAD....
"Plant Acquisition Syndrome"

Garden Design, May 1998

Reprinted from January 1998 issue of Roto-Teller

2019 DCMGA Garden Tour Preview

Through self-guided tours of each garden, learn how the garden owner has addressed issues that most gardeners deal with in the development of their own spaces.

Master Gardeners will be on-site at every location to answer your questions!

This year's annual Garden Tour (Saturday, May 11th from 9 am to 4 pm) features five unique private home gardens north of Lewisville Lake. Advanced-purchase tickets are \$10, available from Master Gardeners, on the DCMGA website, and at select locations (Calloway's in Denton, Lewisville, and Flower Mound, as well as Four Seasons and Meador's). Admission on Tour Day is \$15 at the gate. Admission to a single garden is \$5.

Here's a sneak peek at our lineup.

Cindy's Idyllic Acre









Take What Nature Gives You









A beautiful array of oak trees were a challenge to this two-acre property. The shady areas of this natural landscape were changed to sunny when a few trees were removed. Visitors can now view these created areas that showcase vegetables, herbs, fruit trees, turf grass for play, and garden beds. The gardens here are filled with native and adaptive plants that attract pollinators and control erosion on the sandy sloped lot. Walk through this beautiful area oasis and experience nature and delightful gardens.

Cindy's Idyllic Acre is the product of a hard-working husband and wife team. This incredible homestead offers a cornucopia of vegetable and flower gardens, a wonderful chicken coop, beehive, Tom the Turkey, and a pond full of frogs. Along the pond, take the pathway to discover fish, frogs, shade plants, and a cool comfy spot to rest. What could be more enchanting?

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2019 DCMGA Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

Sanctuary on Red Bluff Drive









Explore nature in this peaceful, engaging garden. Listen to the trickling of water from the water feature as you explore the defined trails of this beautiful garden. Watch the bees, butterflies, and birds as they discover and feed on the native plants. Breathe deeply and enjoy this garden sanctuary that shows nature at its finest.

Hill Country Homestead









A River Runs Through It

This patio garden shows many of the challenges of north central Texas gardening: poor drainage and long periods of both shade and scorching heat in the same beds. See how these obstacles have been overcome in this lovely garden. This now flourishing garden fills the smaller yard and features a newly-installed riverbed. Pollinators are welcomed visitors in the area of featured pollinator plants. Take time to view the culinary herbs and the lovely seating area for entertaining.









A lawn-to-garden transformation greets you as you visit this homestead garden planted with sun and shade perennials. Note the city-commissioned inferno strip garden as it showcases alternatives to turf. Travel through the three distinct gardens that make up the backyard—they display a wide variety of plants ranging from Japanese Maples to sun-loving Texas Natives. Be sure to visit the special rose grown from a cutting from a 100-year rose from San Saba.

Mulch Volcano - What It Is And Why It's Bad

BY REAGAN BRANSTETTER, MARY BRANSTETTER, AND BERNADETTE GILBERT

A mulch volcano is pretty much what it sounds like. It is piling mulch high against a tree trunk, as shown in the photo on the right, that can cause the type of damage shown in the photo below. While properly placing mulch around a tree has many benefits, the drawbacks of mulch volcanoes are numerous.

Mulch under trees should be kept less than 4 inches deep. Roots need oxygen to live, and if the mulch depth is more than 4 inches, oxygen exchange between the soil and the tree roots becomes restricted. A mulch volcano can encourage the roots of a young tree to grow into the mound of mulch rather than into the soil.





Mulch should not come in contact with the tree trunk. It should be kept at least 5 inches away from the tree trunk to maintain a healthy environment for the tree bark.

Mulch in contact with the tree trunk creates an unhealthy, moist environment that can lead to cracks in the bark.

Insects and fungal growths exploit these cracks to invade the tree. Rodents also find these conditions ideal for chewing the bark and damaging the tree.

Proper mulching, shown below, should be no more than 2 to 4 inches deep. Limiting the mulch depth allows efficient soil oxygen exchange for healthy tree roots.

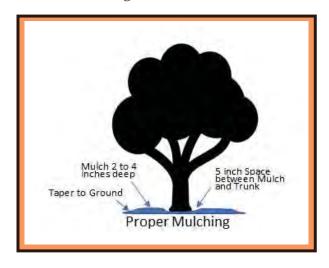
Mulch should be spread out around the tree, as far as

the tree branches extend, and tapered to the ground level at the outer edge.

Mulch selection is critical for a healthy landscape. Plastic mulch inhibits water from reaching the soil and should be avoided. Wood chips, bark chips, or other natural materials are best for mulching. Pine needles or oak leaves are not recommended, as they can change the ph of the soil to a more acidic level.

Avoid volcano mulching.

Proper mulch application and
maintenance makes a healthier tree.



Meet Your AgriLife Staff Jessica Sanders

4-H and Youth Development Agent

Sanders grew up on a small farm in the small town of Paradise in Wise County. Following graduation from Paradise High School, Sanders attended Howard Junior College for two years on a livestock judging scholarship before transferring to Texas Tech University. While attending Texas Tech University, Sanders was an active member of the Reserve National Champion 2010 Meats Judging Team. Sanders graduated from Texas Tech with a bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Leadership with an emphasis in Animal Science.

Following completion of her bachelor's degree, Sanders continued her education at Tarleton State University-Stephenville. While attending graduate school, Sanders worked as a graduate assistant in the office of Agriculture



and Consumer Resources for Dr. Sandra Graham and Dr. Wayne Atchley. Sanders graduated from Tarleton State University with a Master of Science in Agriculture Consumer Resources, with an emphasis in Agriculture Communications, Agriculture Education, and Animal Science.

After attending Texas Tech and Tarleton, Sanders began teaching at Krum ISD as an Agriculture Science Teacher for 6th-12th grade. Sanders taught at Krum ISD before accepting her current position as 4-H Youth Development Agent for Denton County Texas A&M AgriLife.



Did You Know?

DCMGA 30th Anniversary Fun Facts



DCMGA has volunteered at multiple Denton County school systems in its 30 years of community service. One great example is when DCMGA members worked with students, teachers and PTA members at Etheridge Elementary School to establish and maintain a butterfly and hummingbird garden in the school courtyard. We assisted teachers in the children's study of the life-cycle of the butterfly, and identification of butterflies, moths, caterpillars, and hummingbirds. We also developed a display board in the school and started a newsletter about the garden and its activities.



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Advanced Training DCMGA Public Presentations

Our members share their science-based knowledge and experience on a variety of topics.

May 14, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Some of the Favorite Plants of Denton Master Gardeners.

Location: The Robert & Lee DuVall Center, 948B Highland Village Rd, Highland Village, TX 75077.

May 20, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Herbal Branch meeting. Stephanie Porter, Lynn Kiefer, and Patty Cooke will present Making Potpourri. Please bring dried herbs and flowers to share. Location: Extension Office, Joseph A. Carroll Building, 401 W. Hickory Street, Suite 112, Denton, TX 76201-9026.





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DCMGA — HELP DESK— Question of the Month







Help Desk Team Contact Information 940-349-2892 master.gardener@dentoncounty.com

BY BARBARA RIDGE

Q: This mild spring weather always tricks me into planting annuals that look good for a few weeks, but never make it through summer's intense heat. Could you recommend colorful plants and flowers that can make it until fall?

A: Yes! A number of Texas Superstar® plants provide value and beauty throughout the heat of our North Texas summers. Texas Superstars receive the designation because they are the toughest, most reliable, and best-looking plants studied extensively by Texas A&M Agrilife Research and Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service.

The selections listed here either bloom continuously from spring to fall or their foliage remains attractive during the same time span. Long-blooming annuals and multi-season perennials need regular fertilization. Some benefit from timely deadheading of spent blooms/seed heads or occasional light pruning, although a few are carefree.

In comparison to annuals, perennials will be more expensive, but they will provide many years of beauty. Perennials also may grow slower than annuals, so be patient if they seem sluggish ... they're not. Remember this phrase about perennials, "First year, they sleep; the second year, they creep; the third year, they leap." However, the perennials listed here will bloom their first year.

View the list and additional resources on our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyMGA/posts/2925998654107446 or the DCMGA website at https://dcmga.com/north-texas-gardening/perennials/



Photo courtesy of DCMGA Member Kathryn Wells

Gomphrena globosa thrives in Texas summer heat. Color varieties vary from whites to pinks to purples.

If you have questions about Texas Superstars® or any other horticulture-related subjects, please contact our Master Gardener Help Desk at 940.349.2892 or master.gardener@dentoncounty.com.

It's free of charge, and it's our pleasure to assist you.

https://dcmga.com



Denton County Master Gardener Association





Prepurchase tickets for only \$10

Explore Five Beautiful Denton County Gardens

Prepurchase tickets for \$10 at dcmga.com.

Tickets may be purchased the day of the tour for \$15

Inspiration abounds in these private residential North Texas gardens! Visit dcmga.com for more information, including ticket sales and garden descriptions/locations.

















TEXAS A&M GRILIFE

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2019 Area Plant Sales

Following is a list of plant sales in the area where native plants can be found. Check the organization website or Facebook pages for more detail.

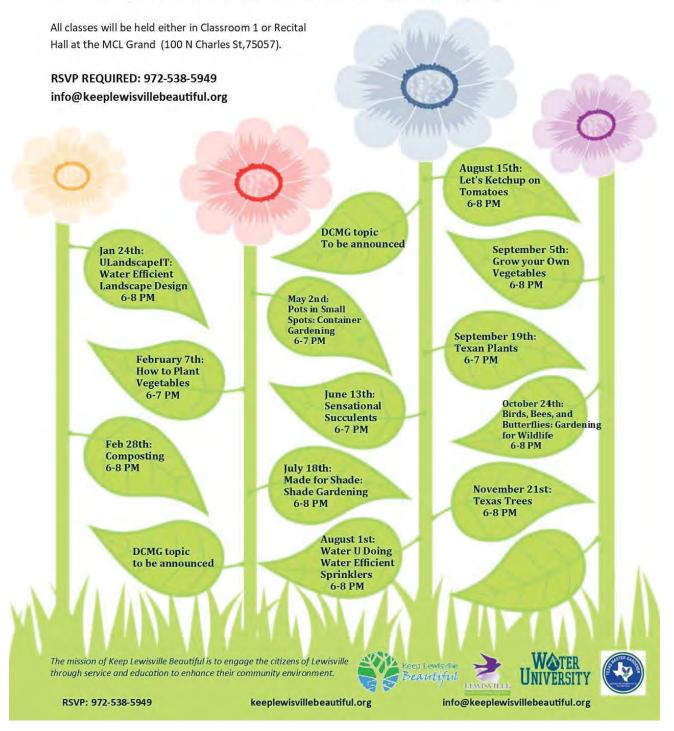
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www.thewildscape.org/
_www.txdg.org/plant-sale/
www.txnativeplants.org/
n www.ccmgatx.org
www.wildflower.org/plant-sales
Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Collin County Master Gardener Association LadyBird Johnson Wildflower Center Wide Assortment

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Keep Lewisville Beautiful Presents...

2019 Garden Secrets Classes

Join Keep Lewisville Beautiful and City of Lewisville for FREE community classes led by Denton County Master Gardeners and The Texas Agrilife Extension Office. Classes are free but seats are limited to first 40 participants to RSVP.







2019 CHILDREN'S GARDEN

AT FAIROAKS

An Opportunity for Families to Learn Gardening Together

The children's garden invites parents & their children to learn about gardening through planting, maintaining, & harvesting vegetables & herbs. Our children's garden is unique since we share the garden with Fairoaks, a senior independent living community. We will be planting in the vegetable garden at the back of Fairoaks with the residents—a wonderful opportunity for children and seniors to experience a growing garden together.

WHERE

Fairoaks 1950 Lattimore St., Denton



Thursday mornings from 10:00-11:00 starting March 21st until the Veggie Show on Saturday, June 15th

WHO

Dana Bays Bill White

DEMONOPIC

How to Grow Microgreens

Butterflies in the Garden

How to Maintain Trees

How to Compost with Worm

How to Grow in a Greenhouse

How to Plant ,

Lady Bug Life

How to Compost

Tops and Bottoms



The weather determines what we are

able to plant each week, but our planting includes radishes, carrots, potatoes.

spinach, lettuce, chard, squash, peas, beans, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers,

onions, herbs, watermelon, and cantaloupe We will also be harvesting

throughout the season.

DATE

Thursday, March 28

Thursday, March 21 Planting

Thursday, April 4 Planting

Thursday, April 11 Planting

Thursday, April 18 Planting with the Residents

Thursday, April 25 Planting

Thursday, May 2 Check on the Residents' Plants

Planting

Thursday, May 9 Planting

Thursday, May 16 Vermicomposting

Thursday, May 23 Trees

Thursday, May 30 Planting

Thursday, June 6 Field Trip to Shilloh Gardens (Weather Permitting)

Thursday, June 13 Harvesting

Saturday, June 15 Final harvest for Veggie, Flower, Herb, Fruit Show

9 am - 12 pm

Denton County Historical Park, West Mulberry Street.

Denton.

See website for additional information.

www.dcmga.com

PLEASE PARK ON LATTIMORE STREET. IN THE EVENT OF BAIN, THE CHILDREN'S GREVEN WILL NOT MEET.

For additional information, visit us on facebook: DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION or online: www.demga.com

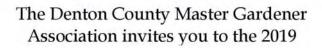


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ATERAS ALM GILLLIFE EXTENSION

https://dcmga.com



Denton County Vegetable, Hower, Herb & Fruit Show!

brought to you by









Saturday, June 15, 2019 9am to 12pm



Entries accepted between 9 & 10am. Judging begins at 10am. Winners announced at 12pm. Entries open to all Denton County Residents. Categories for Adults & Children. Cash Awards!

Denton County Historical Park & Community Market 317 W. Mulberry Street (at corner of Carroll Street) Denton, Texas 76201 Visit www.dcmga.com for full details & rules

ATEXAS A&M GRILIFE EXTENSION Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

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Denton Parks and Rec | www.dentonparks.com

Jr. Master Gardener Camp

July 22-26, 9 a.m.-noon

Ages 6-11, \$65

Garden with experts! Each day we will study a different aspect of backyard gardening through horticultural and environmental science activities led by Denton County Master Gardeners. Camp is located in air conditioned classrooms and Outdoor Learning Center at Newton Rayzor Elementary.



Register at www.dentonparks.com

Denia Rec Center, 1001 Parvin St., (940) 349-7784

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Mission Statement

Denton County Master Gardener Association educates and engages county residents in the implementation of research-based horticultural and environmental practices that create sustainable gardens, landscapes, and communities.

Extension EO/EEO Statement

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

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President Pat Moyer Vice President Kathryn Wells **Director of Education Kim Wootton** Secretary Kimberlee Shaneyfelt Katherine Woodward Treasurer **Communications Director** Liz Moyer Member-at-Large **Gay Campbell Volunteer Coordinator Kaye Gross** Past President **Tammie Gurley**

Social Media

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https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyMGA

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/DentonCountyMGA

Twitter:

https://twitter.com/@DentonCountyMGA

Pinterest:

https://www.pinterest.com/DentonCountyMGA

Save the Date

May 4	Plant Sale
May 11	Garden Tour
June 15	Vegetable, Fruit, Herb & Flower Show
August 14	30th Anniversary Celebration
ee/	

Contact Information

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Communications: dcmga.communications@gmail.com

Website: https://dcmga.com

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Content

Submission deadline for the May edition of The Root is Wednesday, May 15. Submissions may be revised at the discretion of the editor.

Ideas, photos, and articles are welcome and may be submitted to Editor Karen Gibson at karenhoot19@gmail.com or Communications Director Liz Moyer at lizmoyer@live.com.