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Denton County Master Gardener Association

THE ROOT

Grow With Us





Buds From The Board

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE. PRESIDENT

February is known worldwide as the month to celebrate your loved ones. Here are a few new and creative ways to show your love.

Rather than buying cut roses that wilt in no time, why not purchase a rose bush or climbing rose and plant it together with your loved one? Your loved one will be rewarded with many seasons of beautiful color! This terrific publication on Earth-Kind® Roses from Texas A&M AgriLife will help you make the best choice.

Plan and plant a garden of cool-season edibles such as potatoes, turnips, beets, spinach, leafy greens, and cool-season herbs. Together you can nurture your garden and harvest and cook delicious vegetables. Read about <u>Growing & Using Cool-Season Herbs</u> in the November 2018 issue of The Root and our Gardening Basics Fact Sheet <u>Growing Potatoes</u>.

February is the perfect time to plant fruit trees. Shop local plant nurseries for varieties that do well in North Texas. They will bloom and produce luscious fruits you can bake into cobblers or

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Buds From The Board (Cont.)

or preserve into jams and jellies together. Two great resources for helping you get started are the <u>Fruit & Nut Trees</u> article in the December 2018 issue of The Root and our Gardening Basics Fact Sheet Fruit Trees for North Texas.

Grow your gardening skills together by attending one of our many presentations by expert Master Gardener speakers. Topics range from landscaping for pets, selecting the best plants for your landscape, garden photography, plant propagation, butterfly gardening, and more! Check out our <u>Event Calendar</u> to choose a few to attend.

Visit a local garden or trail with your loved one. There are lots of choices nearby to inspire you. Learn more about your options on our <u>Gardens & Trails</u> page.

Check out the <u>Monthly Gardening Tips</u> on our new and improved website for more gardening ideas in February.

As winter ends this month, we welcome spring and all its joys. We are delighted to welcome a new class of Master Gardener Interns and congratulate the 2022 Master Gardener class on their recent graduation.

We hope to see you at one of our presentations or at a local nursery buying plants this month. Happy Gardening!





Denton County Master Gardener YouTube Channel

Click on "Videos" and check out our new presentations!

And don't forget to subscribe!

http://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener





Favorite

Reads

Plant Partners: Science-Based Companion Planting Strategies for the Vegetable Garden, by Jessica Walliser. Storey Publishing, LLC; (December 22, 2020).

The First-Time Gardener: Growing Vegetable (Volume 1) (The First-Time Gardener's Guides,1) by Jessica Sowards. Cool Springs Press; Illustrated edition (March 2, 2021).

How to House-Plant: A Beginner's Guide to Making and Keeping Plant Friends by Heather Rodino. Union Square & Co.; (April 2, 2019).

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Beulah Acres Agroforest BY DANIEL ARENAS

Let's start by reaffirming that our volunteers are priceless! And there is nothing that can change the joyful fact that when you have the right people, at the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing, we are shown that what can be accomplished together is limitless!

It has been 3 years since we first started breaking ground at the Agroforest area. It all started in early 2011 when we first started to plant the Global Spheres Center's Israel Prayer Garden, located in Corinth, Texas. That garden became our model, our source of inspiration and blessing, our pivot point for expansion, and a joy to help launch this beautiful journey.

Working the grounds, connecting with the land, developing relationships, sharing valuable information and experiences ... these are all part of the living process of practicing good stewardship of the land. Surely making all the "good" mistakes teaches us how to do better next time!

Our garden crew is incredible! We have become a big family after many years of working together. Then this family got bigger when Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, our community and church, and many other people who are dear to us came together to move this place towards multiplication.

We have continued to adjust and improve season after season and are always looking for ways to fulfill the purpose of this area which we believe is to restore the land, promote native and local ecoregion, be efficient and creative, teach and learn, honor our elders, keep preparing the way for the future generations, and harvest from the dedication we strive daily to achieve.

Demonstration Gardens Harvest



Beulah Acres Classroom



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Beulah Acres Agroforest (Cont.)

We have survived snowstorms, drought years, strong winds, and a lot of rain! Each situation taught us something to be prepared for. Watching and learning how nature behaves has shown us how at the right time, and the right season, it will reveal what are the next steps in an ever-learning progression.

We've learned to always persist diligently, accepting that life changes, and setbacks are actually necessary to spring us forward. It teaches us to walk the path while looking for wisdom and being patient as things around us move and shift.



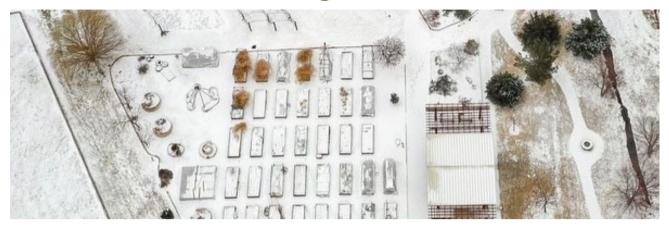
Beulah Acres Community Garden

Many areas were developed; a green tunnel used for berry companion planting, the 3 sisters garden, a native pond, the chicken infinity garden, a linear food forest, natural food forest, a native forest, and many other native and pollinator gardens. There is always something we want to "fix" or to "make better" and we certainly do, but at the same time it seems that many things here are "fixed" naturally, so we always try to keep in mind that the problem could actually be the solution.

Throughout the years, we have planted countless native perennial seeds, trees, shrubs, bushes, vines, herbs, flowers, and edible crops. We have harvested rainwater, made our own compost, raised farm animals (Beulah Barnyard), a community garden (Beulah Acres CG), and begun a farmers' market (First Fruits Farmers MKT). We have built strong relationships with community partners, offered many kinds of adult classes (Beulah Acres Center), a youth gardening program (Global Gardeners Beulah Acres/Illuminate/Science with Attitude/Junior Master Gardener), and enjoyed many Volunteer Days. There were adjustments, new projects, and always future plans! Beulah Acres became a bustling place, and as you can see, it has surely become an extension of each of our homes.

The latest result from all the hard work and dedication is our newest adventure, Beulah Acres Bounty. Beulah's official line of products is offered at the First Fruits Farmers Market and now online as well! And it all started in a promised and blessed garden, many years ago.

Beulah Acres Agroforest (Cont.)



Beulah Acres Community Garden Under Winter Snow

Surplus comes in time. Today's harvest is tomorrow's abundance; multiplication and prosperity are our never-ending, lifelong goals in the fields. Right people, place, and time!

Now is Winter Season in North Texas, and January's climate has ups and downs, in a region where the weather can change so much and so quickly, we expect that everything will be dormant, the grass is not growing, there are low irrigation needs and it is a great time to prune and clean up. Since it hasn't been raining much lately and the soil is drier, it is a great time to adjust planting areas and add compost where needed, start seeds indoors, and prepare ahead of time so we are ready for Spring!

If you had the opportunity to read the Beulah Acres Agroforest's update in the <u>October 2021</u> <u>issue of *The Root*</u>, you will see that we have accomplished many goals we set back then. We still have more dreams to fulfill, and the road ahead of us is likely to be greater than we can ever imagine.

So, at the end of each day, we smile because we are glad and grateful to be part of such a dynamic place! Right people, right place, right time, doing the right thing, together!

We finish this testimony with saying one more time because it never gets old: Thank You for everything you do, and we hope to see you soon!

Abundant Blessings,
Beulah Acres Agroforest Family
Daniel Arenas & Allison Lohse
https://agroforest@beulahacres.org

₩ ₩

Meet Thomas "Tom" O'Brien

BY JERRY AND GLORIA ALEXANDER

Tom is a graduate of the 2019 Master Gardener Class and, of course, he continues to be in good standing. As you can see, he's only been a Master Gardener for a few years but has already held a board position as V.P. of Projects. In 2021, Tom was a member of the Nominating Committee, during which time he was in rehab for several weeks. He did not let this hinder his commitment. He was positively focused on continuing his role. He is currently serving as the Technology Team Lead.

Prior to joining the board, Tom was trained by Master Gardener Russell Tyson to set up the equipment for meetings at the Carroll Building. Tom joined the Technology Team during the 2020 Volunteer Fair, which was also the beginning of the pandemic. He helped to analyze various virtual meeting software products and recommended Zoom, which was approved by the board. Tom set up the Zoom account and trained project managers on how to conduct online meetings. This process allowed DCMGA to continue during covid. Many of us heard Tom's voice during various meetings.

Tom had a 40-year career in financial services as a project manager in both business operations and technology.



Tom with his daughter Elena and grandson Wyatt.



Tom O'Brien DCMGA Class 2019

This also included leadership roles. He knows how to manage and execute projects.

On a more personal note, Tom is a proud father, grandfather, and military veteran whose qualities make him a leader within DCMGA. We are privileged to have Tom be a part of our organization. If you have not had an opportunity to meet Tom, please take a moment to introduce yourself when you see him. Thank you, Tom, for your dedicated service to this community.

2023 Garden Tour Preview

Hidden Cottage Garden - Denton, Texas May 13, 2023

Landscape Design tips, the importance of Native & Adapted plants, a shade gardening presentation, a scavenger hunt, and local arts and crafts booths – our Annual Garden tour has it all.

Watch the <u>DCMGA website</u> for ticket information in mid-February.

By Steve & Joanne Spurgin

Like many homeowners, we started with a new home constructed on an undeveloped lot. As Master Gardeners we both shared many ideas but also had unique interests that we wanted to incorporate into our garden. So, after six years of successes and failures, we're opening our "Hidden Cottage Garden" to be featured in the 2023 Garden Tour.

Designed around a Craftsman-style home, our cottage garden has no rules except variety and abundance. Following traditional cottage garden design, we created various "garden rooms" for





specific functions - shade, four seasons, containers, wildlife, privacy, and entertaining family and friends. Around the yard, color and texture dominate the garden as well as curved walkways of various limestone, crushed granite, pea gravel, and mulch all leading to various sitting areas. Each sitting area offers different plant types, and relaxing views, and the walkways encourage you to keep walking to see more.

Beds are filled with standard cottage garden plants of Poppies, Yarrow, Roses, Verbena, and their multitude of native and adapted flower friends that spill onto the pathways, while attracting pollinators and birds. Edible plants are randomly placed among the landscape emphasizing that a large, dedicated vegetable or herb garden space isn't always necessary. Plus, it adds surprise to drifts of self-sown annuals.

2023 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

Hidden Cottage Garden - Denton, Texas

Throughout our garden, you'll see the repurposing of materials. Antique iron gates were installed to separate the front and back yards. The swing is a favorite of the grandkids. Beauty also comes from size, texture, and color, so not all areas highlight blooming plants. The backyard is completely secluded and the firepit provides a great entertainment area for family and friends.



A unique garden shed with a potting area, workbench, polycarbonate roof, and shelving for storing plants in the winter highlight the upper backyard. Many quirky wall hangings and dried flowers, plus an outdoor workbench, draw you to this area of the yard.

When the house was built, the upper layer of boulders defined the boundary of the backyard. The following year the second layer of boulders was added to stabilize the slope for erosion control. A final layer of logs, cut from trees removed for construction, was added to finish out and define

the ledge area. This secluded area is planted with shade-loving plants, and Japanese maples, and offers a beautiful view of the top and bottom areas of the garden. We added the stairways to make it easier to access the bottom which is a Certified Wildlife Habitat.

One beautiful full-sun garden area, which includes a raised garden bed and repurposed tree stump, came about because of drainage problems. The natural drainage path during construction was altered leading to the loss of several trees and erosion. This forced us to modify the landscaping when shade-loving plants suddenly received full sun. To address control of excess runoff, we installed a dry riverbed to provide a pathway into a rain garden and to highlight a full sun garden bed, earning us a Monarch Waystation designation. The rain garden has two levels to temporarily hold and collect excess water for absorption but also provides a path to a lower creek area. Annuals, natives, and grasses are planted in this area and attract butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds. A wildflower area was added and reseeds itself each year. This area of the garden is in an easement area and gives enjoyment to the many walkers and cars driving by.

We hope our Hidden Cottage Garden inspires and challenges you to try different things and enjoy the gardening world. To provide support and motivation, the "Ask A Master Gardener" booth will be available for your gardening questions as well as docents placed throughout the garden.

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Plant of the Month Texas SuperStar Plant Program Overview

BY BEVERLY DUNCAN

Texas SuperStar is a registered trademark owned by Texas A&M AgriLife Research.

The Texas SuperStar Plant Program provides an excellent source for thoroughly researched plants of all types that are suitable to our area.

First, a bit of background:

- The need for the program was identified in the early 1970s and 80s when most plants recommended for our area and most of Texas were more suited for Northern climates or Europe.
- Texas needed plants that could survive weather extremes from heat and prolonged drought to heavy rainfalls.
- Also needed were plants that could grow in a variety of soils and pH ranges.
- In addition, many plants that did perform well in Texas landscapes were not readily available in the trade or in sufficient numbers.

As a result, a partnership was formed through the Texas A&M Research and Extension offices and the San Antonio Nurseryman. Several growers in the San Antonio area grew and researched the plants in the beginning stages of program development.

The program began with the Texas
Bluebonnet, *Lupinus texensis* in 1989, and has
grown into more than 88 perennials, annuals,
fruits, vegetables and specialty plants. Each
one is trialed across various Texas locations
using the Earth-Kind system combining the



Henry Duelberg Salvia, DCMGA Member Karen Gibson

best principles of traditional/conventional and natural/organic gardening and landscaping practices.

Some of the many qualities of any SuperStar plant include an overall attractive appearance, must appeal to the average homeowner regardless of their gardening expertise, and be as pest resistant as possible (deer proof is a bonus!). The plant should be attractive enough in its sales container that it "sells itself" to consumers who have never heard of the attributes of the plant.

Texas SuperStar Plant Program Overview (Cont.)

The following is a short list of plants from each category that have proven to be successful in our area. For more detailed information and the entire plant list, refer to the official Texas Superstar website, http://texassuperstar.com/index.html.

Annuals

- · Vinca "Cora" Series periwinkle
- Tidal Wave Petunia
- · Whopper Begonias

Perennials

- · Henry Duelberg Salvia
- · New Gold Lantana
- · John Fannick Perennial Phlox

Woody Shrubs

- Belinda's Dream Rose
- Lynn's Legacy Cenizo
- 'Blue Angel' Shrub Althea

Trees

- Lacey Oak
- · Possum Haw Deciduous Holly
- · Basham's Party Pink Crapemyrtle

Specialty Plants

- Arctic Frost Mandarin Hybrid
- 'Balsamic Blooms' Basil
- · 'Dwarf Cherry Surprise' or BHN 968 Tomato
- · Purple Flash Ornamental Pepper
- · 'Green Magic' Broccoli



New Gold Lantana by Jonathan Zander, CC BY-SA 2.5



Lynn's Legacy Cenizo, DCMGA Member Karen Gibson

Do your own research and give some of these winners a try in your own gardens this year!

Happy Gardening!



February → Valentine's Day → Rose Care Month

Roses should be fertilized around the middle of February—Valentine's Day is a good reminder. Begin spring fertilization right after you prune them. Roses are heavy feeders, so continue to feed them every month during the growing season using a balanced fertilizer, e.g.10-10-10.

NOTE: Since our Denton County soil tends to retain phosphorus and potassium, it is recommended that you perform a soil test annually or every second year before adding more of those minerals.

Resources On Rose Pruning, Diseases, And General Care

Denton County Master Gardener Association - DCMGA

https://dcmga.com/

"Earth-Kind Roses: Beauty That's Tough to Bear"

https://www.dcmga.com/wp-content/uploads/docs/agrilife-learn/flowering-plants/al-earth-kind-roses.pdf

"Pruning Roses," The Root, February 2022

https://www.dcmga.com/wp-content/uploads/docs/root/root-2022-02.pdf

Texas A&M AgriLife

Aggie Horticulture - "Pruning Methods"

<u>https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/publications/roses/prune.html</u>
AgriLife Today - "Pruning Roses Promotes Growth, Adds Vigor To Plants"
<u>https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2019/02/27/pruning-roses-promotes-growth-adds-vigor-to-plants/</u>



Beautiful Roses

graced Big Sky Oasis, one of the featured gardens included on the 2022 DCMGA Garden Tour.

This Year's Garden Tour promises to inform and delight all who attend. Tickets will be available mid-February at www.dcmga.com

Foodscaping: A Different Approach to Gardening

BY KELLI BIXLER

In 2020, food banks around the country asked for additional donations of fresh produce to help those affected by the global pandemic. My fellow gardeners at the Flower Mound First Baptist Community Garden answered the call by filling every empty space in their garden with an edible plant. Following the model set at the community garden, I started filling open spaces in my ornamental flower beds with edible plants. The community garden set a donation record that year with the help of supplemental planting and donations from local vegetable gardeners (like me). I didn't know it at the time, but I was approaching gardening differently. I would soon discover that I was "foodscaping."

The term "foodscaping" means the incorporation of edibles into a traditional ornamental landscape (Arthur, 2017). Most homes have ornamental planting beds with spaces between flowers, shrubs, and trees. Those spaces provide perfect niches to incorporate edible plants into the landscape.

Foodscaping requires planning but can be easily accomplished. Using the steps below, you can create biodiversity in your landscape and create a healthier ecosystem in your garden. The bonus is keeping your ornamental palate in place while enjoying your homegrown produce.



A Pumpkin Vine Growing
Between Shrubs and Flowers
in the Front Yard

Plan Your Garden

Think about the vegetables and herbs you love. It would be best if you grew what you like to eat. Survey your landscape and identify where edible plants may fit in. Consider the size of your ornamentals compared to the sizes edible plants become when fully grown. For example, okra can grow to be 6 feet tall. You would want to plant okra at the rear of the garden bed. Observe sun or wind exposure in certain areas and decide if your selected plants could grow in that environment. Many people find it easier to draw or download a property map and insert images of edible plants comingling with ornamentals.

Work With your Own Space

Foodscaping varies in every landscape. You may have many ornamental beds to develop or own pots and containers on a porch or balcony. Intermingling edible plants with ornamentals will create biodiversity in your garden (or on your porch) by adding a mixture of species. Planting

Foodscaping (Cont.)

edibles strategically between your perennials will camouflage dying vegetable plants and keep the landscape area looking pleasing at the end of the growing season. Be sure your garden has a foundation that will still look structured after the edible plants fade and die.

Prepare Your Soil

Healthy plants come from healthy soil. Before planting season, consider getting a soil test through your county extension office. The outcome of the soil test will help you adjust the nutrients in the soil before adding edible plants. Next, incorporate a loose layer of compost or mulch into your garden beds. Adding nutrient-rich, organic matter to the soil each year benefits edible and ornamental plants. Loose, amended soil helps plants to absorb nutrients, use oxygen and stabilize root systems.

Choose Your Edible Plants Sensibly

Envision what your edible plants will look like in the garden. Will they add to your color palette or envelop the entire garden space? If you have the space, vining edibles like pumpkins, squash, melons, or cucumbers can replace bare areas. Swiss chard or strawberries could add a pop of crimson to garden borders. Make a list of the vegetables, fruit, and herbs you want to cultivate. Investigate possible pests and diseases that affect them. If the plants you choose require more care than you want to give, choose an easier edible plant to grow. Gardening should be enjoyable, not a burden. The flexibility of foodscaping allows gardeners to select plants that fit their needs. If needed, you can skip a season and still have a structured landscape.

Use What You Have

You do not have to create new garden locations when foodscaping. Identify existing beds that get around six hours of sunlight a day. Entryways and porches can also be foodscaped with containers. You can use items you already own like wheelbarrows, crates, recycled pots, or barrels to plant edible gardens. The plant diversity you create with foodscaping increases the presence of pollinators, suppresses weeds, and decreases pests. Contrasting plants grown together can disrupt the ability of pests to find their host plants. Fewer pests will create a healthier ecosystem, which means less maintenance. Varied planting makes the landscape a more biodiverse habitat for insects, birds, butterflies, turtles, frogs, and mammals. (Arthur, 2017).



A Cucumber Plant Growing in a Patio Pot

Foodscaping (Cont.)

Experiment

Some edible plants will prefer particular spaces in your landscape. If a plant is unsuccessful in one spot, plant it in another location in the next growing season. Place edible plants with similar water and sun requirements together for easier care. Most edible plants need full sun, but some will grow in part shade. Use your regional recommendations for planting, but experimentation will assist you in determining which plants thrive in certain locations.

Just a Few Recommendations

Countless vegetables and herbs can be used in Foodscaping. Below are some of the standouts that numerous gardeners recommend.

- Lettuce
- Basil
- Peanuts
- Kale
- Eggplant
- Peppers
- 155Pium
- Swiss Chard
- OkraOnions
- Radishes
- Artichokes
- Chives



Tomatoes Growing in a Pollinator Garden

And many more!

Foodscaping can make an immense impact on daily life. In addition to allowing growers to become less dependent on grocery stores for food, foodscaping also helps to enhance existing landscapes. Use less fuel and drive less often to the store for produce. Improve the habitat for plants and animals and the biodiversity in gardens by planting edible plants beside ornamental plants. Perhaps foodscaping can provide sustenance to more local communities in need by utilizing existing growing spaces. Gardeners will discover a different approach to landscaping while foodscaping. Inspiration awaits.

Resources

Arthur, Brie. (2017). The Foodscaping Revolution. St. Lynn's Press.

Beesley, Cheryl. (2015). Landscaping with Edible Plants in Texas. Texas A&M University Press.

Leander, Patty G. "Edible Gardening," *Texas Gardener*. https://www.texasgardener.com/edible-gardening/

Volunteer Opportunities

Plan Your Week We all enjoy PYW. If you would be interested in helping with this most valuable information tool, please let us know. Gain valuable volunteer service hours as you assist Trish Percy in communicating all the timely dates that keep our organization running smoothly.

Tech Team



The Grove Pat Moyer is currently serving at the Grove. He is seeking someone to take over as PM.

One of Denton County's Government Centers located in Carrollton hosts an award-winning Denton County Master Gardeners
Association project, called the Sandy Jacobs Government Center
Annex Fruit and Nut Grove.

If you are interested in learning about any of these positions, contact Trish, Tom, or Pat through VMS.



FMFB Community Garden 2022 Recap

BY DAVID HUFFMAN



In 2022, the FMFB Community Garden donated 3,571 pounds of fresh produce to CCA's Food Pantry. It's a wonderful partnership to help those in need in Denton County.

Flower Mound First Baptist Church donated the use of the land and the water (including well maintenance) for the garden. FMFB also donated bottled water to all the volunteer workers every week.

Tractor Supply in Bartonville donated all the seeds (plus other supplies) for the garden.

Denton County Master Gardeners Association not only donated monetary assistance for supplies, etc. but provided an incredible 575 hours of volunteer labor equivalent to \$17,221 (at Independent Sector's value of \$29.95 per volunteer hour).

Other community members, neighbors, and friends have also donated an awesome 495 hours of volunteer labor equivalent to \$14,825 (at Independent Sector's value of \$29.95 per volunteer hour). They also have helped with purchasing various supplies, plants, etc.

We team up with LISD's Focus on the Future program to help developmentally challenged kids learn valuable skills by helping in the garden.

DCMGA's mission statement reads "We educate Denton County residents on safe, effective, and sustainable horticultural practices that promote development of healthy gardens,

landscapes, and communities.

During the growing season, we meet every Thursday morning for a couple of hours of "fun" work, getting our hands dirty, and enjoying a great time together as we help others in our community.





Growing Mushrooms in Containers BY KELLI BIXLER

Did you know that we have a mushroom-growing season in North Texas? Mushroom season in our area is October through April, so you can start growing now. An easy way to start is by growing mushrooms in containers. Mushroom containers can be as simple as a laundry basket, milk crate, or bucket.

As wetter weather inches back into the forecast, the season becomes just right to plant mushroom spawn. Spawn is different from seed; it is the material that holds a strain of mushroom spores until they are moved into a permanent container or garden. Most spawn comes in a solid block of crushed wood chips or straw that can be crumbled when planted. Mushroom spawn should be purchased from a reputable grower. Many growers can be found online and may include educational videos on their sites to help teach you everything you need to know about growing your own mushrooms.

Mushroom planting is easy, but keep in mind spores do not grow in soil. Mushrooms are decomposers that need growing materials such as straw, sawdust, or shredded newspapers to retain moisture. They feed on decomposing organic materials such as wood chips, finely shredded hardwood, or coffee grounds. Plenty of moisture, humidity, and a shady or dark place to grow is needed for mushrooms to thrive. All these elements will help you grow a bountiful crop of mushrooms that can add nutrients and flavor to your healthy diet.



Photos Courtesy DCMGA Member Kelli Bixler

Close-up of Oyster Mushrooms Growing in a Basket

Not all mushrooms are created equal when it comes to growing them in containers. Most experts agree that oyster varieties grow best using this method. Temperate and tropical forests are where oyster mushrooms are found in the wild. They grow on dead or decaying logs or in other organic materials and are distinctly spatula or shell-shaped. Oyster mushrooms come in many colors, including white, gold, grey, pink, and brown, and tend to be the best mushrooms for growing outdoors in our area. They thrive in temperatures between 30° to 70° F but will go dormant during the high temperatures during summers in Texas.

Growing Mushrooms in Containers (Cont.)

The container you choose to start your mushroom spawn should have a few characteristics. It should be at least 8 to 12 inches tall and have openings on the sides, such as a laundry basket. If using a bucket for your container, you can drill holes in the sides to create spaces for horizontally growing oysters to bloom. Cut straw is the best substrate to hold moisture, and

oyster mushrooms consume wood material such as shredded wood chips for food. They prefer moist (not wet) substrate and moderate to high humidity that occurs after a rain storm, for example.

Begin your mushroom planting by placing a generous amount of straw on the bottom of a container. Next, add a layer of wood material, and then add a layer of mushroom spawn by crumbling it between your fingers. Continue this layering method of straw, wood, and spawn until the container is almost full. Top off the container with another generous layer of straw. Move your container to a spot that will stay shady most of the day, and then water the container well, saturating the top and sides of the layers.

Now, the hard work is over. Your job is to keep the layers moist and wait for the mycelium to grow. Mycelium is the root-like structure of the fungus that grows on the substrate. When environmental conditions are just right, the mycelium will bloom, creating a single or cluster of mushrooms. The crop of blooming mushrooms on the top and sides of your container is referred to as a flush. After the oyster mushrooms bloom for 3-5 days and the flat surfaces of the mushrooms begin to roll, you



Kelli with a Winter Flush of Mushrooms

may begin to harvest. Use a knife to harvest a cluster or use your fingers to pop off a single mushroom. Harvesting will help future flushes to grow.

Your container may be brought indoors during freezing conditions or left outside to wait for warmer weather. The mycelium will go dormant in temperatures under 30° F but will come alive again as the temperatures rise and the rains fall. If growing indoors, be sure to keep your container in a dark, humid environment if you want additional flushes. Look online for delicious recipes utilizing your beautiful mushrooms and savor your efforts. And it is just that easy to grow mushrooms in containers. Enjoy!



Friends We Will Miss



Barbara Ridge, Class of 2016

Barbara Ridge received the 2020 Special Merit (Veteran) Award for her Help Desk work, including and especially writing the Help Desk Question of the Week (QOTW) and the monthly Help Desk column for *The Root*. Barbara also had a collection of orchids she cared for. Barbara passed away on December 31, 2022.



Barbie Dane, Class of 2019

Barbie was Project Manager for Cool Shade for the 3rd Grade, which earned her the 2019 Outstanding Project Manager (Intern)
Award. She compiled 364 volunteer hours in her intern year alone. She was also a cheerful helper on the Garden Tour, Science With Attitude, and the Greater Aubrey Area Gardening Series. Barbie passed away on January 5, 2023.

"The purpose of life
is not to be happy.

It is to be useful,
to be honorable,
to be compassionate,
to have it make
some difference
that you have lived
and lived well."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Awards Banquet & Class of 2022 Graduation

At the January 18th Graduation and Awards Banquet, we gathered to celebrate our Association's newest Master Gardeners – the Class of 2022.

Our outgoing President Kathryn Wells was the evening host. She had the privilege of announcing the 2022 Award recipients for their exceptional service contributions and recognizing our 2022 Member Milestoners – those folks who celebrated DCMGA tenures of 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 years.

The introduction and induction of our 2023 Board of Directors capped our fun-filled evening. Many thanks to Graduation & Awards Banquet chair Dee Payne and Kathy Efflandt and their remarkable team.





Congratulations to the Class of 2022!

Amanda Barber Gail Cain

Mary Lynn Carlson

Pam Carroll

Steve Carroll

Deb Chandler

Sydney Chase

Carolyn Collinsworth

Anne Cushman

Penny Davis

Peggy Fox

Jacqueline Freeman

Rebecca Fridley

Sheryl Galbreath

Sandra Garoutte

Ellen Gauntt

Jerry Hamby

Susan Hamby

Mike James

Johna Johnson

Karen Kearns

Teri Kettle

Iakki Lock

Allison Lohse

Regan McCamey

Missy McCormick

Rhonda McKinzie

Kari Miley

Aubrey Noorian Matthew Phelps

Amanda Price

Jean Priddy

Portia Reid

Debbie Schwend

John Shelton

Ivy Summerfield

Lou Tonry

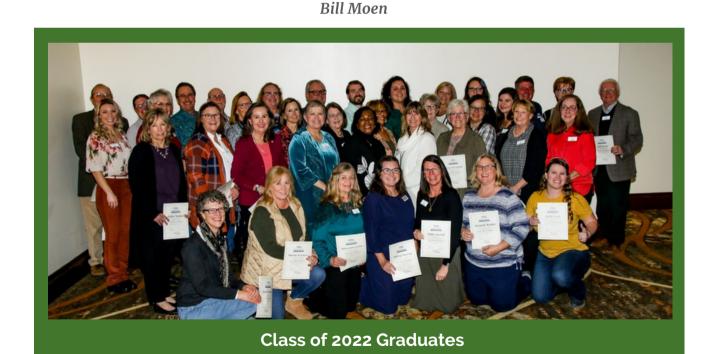
Tim Torno

Debra Wallace

Tray Webber

Reesa Wilkins

Ricky Wilkins





The John Cooper Educator Award,

named after Denton County Master Gardener
Association's founding County Extension Agent for
Horticulture, honors, when warranted, select
veteran members for consistent excellence in
educational volunteer service. Our 2022 recipients,
Janet Gershenfeld (2002) and Ann Hillmann (2017)
fit the bill! Both Janet and Ann have made
innumerable contributions to our Association and
to our community throughout their Master
Gardener tenures.

Congratulations, Janet and Ann, and thank you for your service of educational excellence!





Past President Kathryn Wells (left) and Education Director Daniel Arenas (right) present the 2022 John Cooper Educator Award to recipients Ann Hillmann (top photo) and Janet Gershenfeld (bottom photo).

Educator Awards

are annually presented to veteran and intern members who have demonstrated excellence in our mission of educating and engaging our community in the past year. Our 2022 recipients are Kari Miley (Intern) and Tammie Gurley (veteran).



Tammie Gurley, Veteran Educator of the Year (left) with Education Director Daniel Arenas.



Kari Miley, Intern Educator of the Year (right) with Intern Class Administrator Barbara Beane.



The Award of Excellence

is, when warranted, presented to a veteran member who has demonstrated extraordinary and/or unprecedented service/support to Denton County Master Gardener Association and/or to the community we serve. In our 33-year history, only five members have received this honor. For her leadership including (but not limited to) our new website development, Cheryl Huckabee earned the well-deserved accolade.

Leadership Award (Intern)

is annually presented to an intern who has
demonstrated overall excellence in
representing and leading Denton County
Master Gardener Association.
For his work with the Communications and
Technology Teams (including the website
development project), Bill Moen received
this year's honor.



Past President Kathryn Wells (left) with Award of Excellence recipient Cheryl Huckabee (center) and Director of Education Danieal Arenas (right).



VP-Projects Tom O'Brien (left), Intern Class Administrator Kim Wootton, and Project Manager/Leadership Award (Intern) recipient Bill Moen (right)



Project Manager Awards

are annually presented to veteran members who have demonstrated excellence in leading Association projects.

Garden Tour Project Managers Lori Barr and Beverly Duncan were recognized for their collaborative and comprehensive work in leading the Tour, reinvigorating our members, emphasizing education for volunteers and guests, welcoming a record number of Tour attendees, and making it fun for everyone.

FMFB Community Garden Project Managers
David Huffman and Carol Noble were
recognized for their faithful leadership-partnering with the community and the
volunteers to produce thousands of pounds
(3,571 just in 2022!) of fresh produce for
CCA's Food Pantry while incorporating an
educational component in each work day.



Past President Kathryn Wells (L to r), with Project Manager Award recipients Lori Barr and Beverly Duncan, and VP-Projects Tom O'Brien.



Project Manager Award recipients David Huffman (left) and Carol Noble (center), with VP-Projects Tom O'Brien.



Special Merit Awards

are annually presented to veteran and intern members who have, over the past year, demonstrated exemplary service or support to Denton County Master Gardener Association and to the community we serve.

For 2022, our veteran recipients include Judy Allen, Jolayne LaCour, Lisa Lebsack, Dale Powell, and Lee Ann Yates.

Intern recipients from the Class of 2022 include Peggy Fox, Mike James, and Allison Lohse.







Veteran Special Merit Award recipients Dale Powell (top left), Lee Ann Yates (top center), Lisa Lebsack (top right), Jolayne LaCour (bottom left), and Judy Allen (bottom right) with Member-at-Large Kim Shaneyfelt...









Intern Special Merit awards to recipients Peggy Fox (top), Mike James (bottom left), and Allison Lohse (bottom right).







The Community Partner Award

is periodically presented to an organization or non-DCMGA member of the community who has made a significant contribution in support of our mission and demonstrated a spirit of collaboration and support for Denton County Master Gardener Association.

For support of our Argyle Unity Park Beautification Project, we honored the Town of Argyle.



The Community Partner Award for the Town of Argyle was accepted by Project Manager John Ankeny (second from left) & DCMGA's Argyle Unity Park Beautification member volunteers.



2022 Graduation & Awards Banquet



Janet Gershenfeld (2002) celebrating her 20year member milestone.(center) with CEA-Hort Janet Laminack (left) and Member-At-Large Kim Shaneyfelt (right).



Joe & Tina Bohn (2007) celebrating their 15-year member milestone.



Class of 2012 members Trish Percy, Don Edwards, Pat Edwards, and Ana Hunt celebrating their 10-year member milestone.





Class of 2017 members celebrating their 5year member milestone: David Huffman, Steve Spurgin, Cathie Rod, Sonny Smith, Mary Lehrer, Kim Shaneyfelt, Kathy Rainey, Cece Kenney, Ann Hillmann, Debby Ishee, Kathryn Wells, Kim Wootton.

Graduation and Awards Photos Courtesy DCMGA Member Lea Watson

2022 Member Milestones

Congratulations to our Member Milestoners!

20 Years

Janet Gershenfeld Monique Goodhart Carolyn Tinner Class of 2002

15 Years

Joe Bohn
Tina Bohn
Sue Newhouse
Pam Pierce
Class of 2007

10 Years

Candy Bennett
Raynette Costanza
Don Edwards
Pat Edwards
Ana Hunt
Mary Beth Kuxhouse
Trish Percy
Sallie Schaeffer
Karen Stubbs
KC Walsh
Class of 2012



5 Years

Bonnie Ambrose
Patti Barry
Gay Campbell
Judy Chenault
Sharon Clark
Ashley Davidson
Helen Fairchild
Karen Gibson
Marti Hector
Ann Hillmann
Cynthia Holloway
David Huffman

Debby Ishee
Karen Jamieson
Teresa Kehrweider
Cece Kenney
Cynthia Kraus
Mary Lehrer
Tonya Lillig
Rhonda Love
Beverly McClure
Treva McFadden

Bonnie Raffo
Kathy Rainey
Cathie Rod
Kimberlee Shaneyfelt
Sonny Smith
Steve Spurgin
Robert Vidler
Kathryn Wells
Melinda Woolley
Kim Wootton
Class of 2017

Ianice Normile

Pass-Along Marking

Avoid Plant Sale Prep Horror!

We've all been there. It's time to pot up passalongs for the Plant Sale, but:

- We can't remember which plants were outgrowing their locations and need to be thinned and/or dug around the margins (edges)
- 2. The ones we think probably were candidates are still too small to be sure
- 3. We can't remember the names of the plants, and they are too small for ID



Photos Courtesy DCMGA Member Liz Moyer

Flag Marker

Blb Salvia

Knife Marker

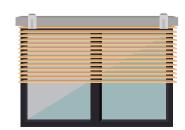
Act now! Grab a permanent felt tip pen and a bunch of plastic knives or utility marking flags and get out there. Mark your plants now for digging in early March. It's a good idea to make yourself a diagram or some notes when you mark them. Check your markers periodically throughout the winter to be sure they are still legible and to remind yourself where they are ...

Another advantage: utility flags and plastic knives come in a variety of colors and can really add a pop to your winter landscape!

Mini-Blinds Wanted

Do you have some used mini-blinds that are destined for the trash? Did your neighbor set out mini-blinds for trash pick-up when they moved out?

The Plant Sale Committee can use any and all mini-blinds for Plant Sale ID stakes. If you have some to donate, contact Bob Bender through VMS.



Oh, the horror!



Denton County Master Gardener Association YouTube Playlists

Flower Arranging
Herbs & Vegetables
Organic Gardening
Other Gardening Topics
Permaculture
Seasonal Tasks & Tips
Waterwise Gardening
Wildlife Habitat Gardening
Houseplants
Landscaping
Pollinators
Roses
Shade Plants
Tree Care
Turf Care

https://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener



Beulah Acres AgroForest

February 11, 2023. 90:00 am to Noon

Permaculture is a forward-thinking design system based on principles found in nature where wildlife and native plants are vital. In this class, you will learn permaculture essential guidelines, ethics, principles, and strategies.

Location: Global Spheres Center, 7801 S Interstate 35, Corinth, TX

To Register:

<u>https://www.dcmga.com/event/introduction-to-permaculture/2023-02-11/</u>

DCMGA Members

Plan Your Week emailed each Friday has the most current Online CE Opportunities.

Resources & Education Opportunities

For Master Gardeners and the Community We Serve

Science-based knowledge on a variety of topics.



New! Home Grown Lecture Series

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Virtual.

February 2, 2023 – Backyard Poultry Fundamentals – Shannon Dietz, County Extension Agent–Ag & Natural Resources

March 2, 2023 - Top "T" Questions: Tomatoes, Turf & Trees - Brandi Keller, County Extension Agent -Horticulture

Registration Required:

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-2023-tickets-479567558477? aff=erelexpmlt



Landscape Design School, Course 1

Gerald Burgner is the faculty coordinator for Course 1 of the Landscape Design School at the George H. W. Bush Presidential Library on Mon & Tues Feb 27 and 28, 2023. The classes are held 9am to 4:30pm each day with lunch and snacks included in the tuition fee of \$145, payable by check, cash or money order.

February 27-28, 2023

9:00 am to 4:30 pm

Location: George H. W. Bush Presidential Library,

College Station

Registration Required:

<u>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Km1LDkc-olHv-fYYVsWsI2nJQIXbvlsR/edit</u>

For More Events - Visit the DCMGA Upcoming Events Calendar

DCMGA —HELP DESK —Question of the Month

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

BY HELP DESK TEAM

Q: I planted agave in my yard last spring. How do I protect it from freezing temperatures this winter?

A: Succulents and cacti in the landscape for texture and color. Damage from frost or freezing temperatures may occur between 24 and 32 degrees. Extensive damage occurs when temperatures are below 20 degrees for extended periods. Here are a few tips for protecting them from frost and freezing temperatures.

- Leave dry leaves around the stem or trunk of the plant in place. These protect the plant from hot and cold extreme temperatures.
- Watering succulents or cacti before a freeze causes their cells to become swollen with water and more susceptible to freezing and bursting. They are more likely to survive if the soil is dry.
- Move potted plants next to the house, wall, or boulder, under a deck or tree, to provide radiant heat and protect them from freezing precipitation.

- Columnar plants or those with long narrow leaves are most vulnerable to tipburn. Cover the tips of the plant with frost cloth or Styrofoam cups.
- Drape plants with frost cloth, a sheet, or a blanket. Match the weight of the covering to the size and sturdiness of the plant to avoid accidental breakage.
- Remove the covering when the daytime temperature is above freezing. Recover when the nighttime temperature is forecasted below freezing.

Freeze-damaged succulents and cacti will be lighter in color, almost white. The damaged part of the plant will wilt, turn black, and may suffer from bacterial rot. Leaves of damaged succulents will usually wilt, show signs of bacterial rot, and fall off. If your plant suffers some damage, remove the collapsed leaves and trim tip-burned leaves to a point with clean pruning shears or a knife. Treat the plant's cut edge with sulfur powder to mitigate the risk of infection. It's best to delay pruning damaged plants until warmer weather.



Frozen Succulent Garden

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Learn more from these resources:

Desert Botanical Garden. (2004, March). Desert Botanical Garden. Retrieved from Desert Gardening Guides:

https://cals.arizona.edu/yavapai/anr/hort/byg/archive/Prevention_and_Care_of%20_Freez_e_Damage_DBG.pdf

Norton, K. (2011, December). How to Protect Succulents from Frost. Retrieved from Under the Solano Sun: https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=6270

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

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

Denton County MGA Interns and Veterans:

Please join DCMGA
VP-Projects Kelli Bixler
and our DCMGA
Project Managers
for the February 8th
(in-person)

2023 Volunteer Opportunity Fair!

Look for details in Plan Your Week, coming every Friday to an email inbox near you.

 $Open\ to\ DCMGA\ members\ and\ in terms\ only;\ not\ a\ public\ event.$



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The Flower Mound Public Library presents

The Denton County Master Gardener Association's

2023 Spring Gardening Series

February 6: Dogscaping

> Does your dog have opinions about your backyard landscape? Have they tried to implement these ideas? Explore how it is possible to achieve and sustain landscape design harmony for the entire family. Presenter Carol Arment is a Denton County Master Gardener and is also certified in Texas Native Plants.

Plant Propagation February 13:

> Would you like to learn to reproduce your favorite plants? Learn tips and tricks for propagating different types of plants for your landscape and share them with others.

Presenter Cheryl Huckabee, the Denton County Master Gardener Association 2023 President, is a specialist in Plant Propagation and Vegetables.

February 20: Garden Photography

Learn how to get the best images while photographing flowers, pollinators, birds and other critters in any garden, native prairie, or natural area. Presenter Janice Goetz is a Denton County Master Gardener, a Texas Master Naturalist with the Elm Fork Chapter, is Native Landscape Certified by the Native Plant Society of Texas, and is a member of several photography clubs in the DFW area.

February 27: Garden Tips and Hacks

> Try fresh ideas and tools that are economical and environmentally sound for you and your garden. Use resources wisely to rid pests, stay healthy, and beautify

Presenter Lynda Harvey is a Denton County Master Gardener and a specialist in Entomology, Vegetables, and Earthkind. She is also certified by the Native Plant Society of Texas.

TEXAS MASTER SGARDENER

All programs start at 7 p.m.

To register, please visit www.flower-mound.com/libraryevents.

FLOWER MOUND 3030 Broadmoor Lane, Flower Mound PUBLIC LIBRARY fmlibrary.net • 972.874.6200









JOIN US AT THE

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY Fair

FEBRUARY 8, 2023, 9:30AM
GLOBAL SPHERES CENTER
7801 S INTERSTATE 35
CORINTH, TX

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AUBREY AREA LIBRARY 226 COUNTRYSIDE DR., AUBREY, TX

JAN

19

Presented by Bonnie Ambrose 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Companion Plants

Learn about the benefits of companion planting to conserve water, save space, improve pest control and pollination, provide habitat for beneficial insects, and add beauty to your garden.

FEB

16

Presented by Mike James 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Plant Choices

Need help selecting plants for your landscape? This presentation will help you learn the crucial factors to consider in choosing the right plant for the right location, such as light, water, soil, and plant characteristics and function.

MAR

(16)

Presented by Rooted in 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Sprinkler Systems 101

Are you confused about how to manage your sprinkler system? This class simplifies the parts and components of your in-ground sprinkler systems with easy-to-follow tips on operating and setting your controller. You'll learn some water-saving tips, too!







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

Denton County Master Gardener Association Upcoming Events

February

21

Winter Seed Sowing
10:30 am - 11:30 am. Josey Ranch Pocket Prairie. Hands On Class
Presented by Lela Khan. 1700 Keller Springs Road, Carrrollton

February Dogscaping

7-8 pm. Co-sponsored by Flower Mound Library. Presented by

February

Texas Superstars

February

Plant Propagation

IR:

7-8 pm. Co-sponsored by Flower Mound Library. Presented by Cheryl Huckabee & Chryl Prestemon. Flower Mound Library.

February

Plant Choices

15

February

Starting Plants from Seeds

165

6:30-7:30 pm. Co-sponsored by The Colony Public Library

February

Garden Tips, Tricks and Hacks 7-8 pm. Co-sponsored by Flower Mound Library.

Check out: dcmga.com

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.





https://dcmga.com



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.

2023 Board of Directors

President	Cheryl Huckabee
Vice-President - Projects	Kelli Bixler
Secretary	Missy McCormick
Treasurer	Dale Powell
Communications Dir Systems	Judy Allen
Education Director	Daniel Arenas
Member-at-Large	Kim Shaneyfelt
Past President	Kathryn Wells
Extension Agent - Horticulture	Janet Laminack

Social Media

Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyMGA

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/DentonCountyMGA

Twitter:

https://twitter.com/@DentonCountyMGA

Pinterest:

https://www.pinterest.com/DentonCountyMGA

YouTube:

 $\underline{http://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener}$

Save the Date

February 8 Volunteer Opportunity

Fair (Interns & Members Only) -Global Spheres

March 9

General Meeting & Program, "Gardening Under Glass" - Global Spheres

Contact Information

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Joseph A. Carroll Building 401 W. Hickory Street Suite 112 Denton TX 76201-9026

Office: 940.349.2883

Help Desk:
940.349.2892
master.gardener@dentoncounty.gov

Webmaster: dcmga.webmaster@gmail.com

Communications: dcmga.communications@gmail.com

Website: https://dcmga.com

Content

Submissions deadline for the March edition of The Root is Wednesday, February 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 or Communications Director Judy Allen at dcmga.communications@gmail.com.

All photos are courtesy of DCMGA's Creative Visual Arts (CVA) Team unless otherwise attributed.