



# THE ROOT

Grow  
With  
Us 



## 35 YEARS AND STILL GROWING



<p><b>02</b> <a href="#"><u>Buds From The Board</u></a></p> <p><b>03</b> <a href="#"><u>Gifts For Gardeners</u></a></p> <p><b>04</b> <a href="#"><u>2025 Garden Tour Preview</u></a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garden Tapestry</li> <li>• Secluded Sanctuary</li> <li>• Windblown Wildscape</li> <li>• Alice in Cactusland</li> <li>• Shiloh Field Community Garden</li> </ul> <p><b>09</b> <a href="#"><u>Earth-Kind Design Class</u></a></p> <p><b>10</b> <a href="#"><u>Holiday Greetings</u></a></p>	<p><b>11</b> <a href="#"><u>Membership Renewal</u></a></p> <p><b>11</b> <a href="#"><u>December Garden Tips</u></a></p> <p><b>12</b> <a href="#"><u>Pass-Along Marking</u></a></p> <p><b>12</b> <a href="#"><u>Resources &amp; Education Opportunities</u></a></p> <p><b>13</b> <a href="#"><u>December Upcoming Events</u></a></p> <p><b>13</b> <a href="#"><u>What to Plant in December</u></a></p> <p><b>14</b> <a href="#"><u>Earth-Kind Design Flyer</u></a></p> <p><b>15</b> <a href="#"><u>DCMGA Contact Info &amp; Mission Statement</u></a></p>
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# Buds from the Board

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE, PRESIDENT

As the year winds down and winter settles in, it's the perfect time to start dreaming about the 2025 growing season. A new year brings fresh opportunities to nurture our gardens, grow our skills, and deepen our connection with nature. But before we leap into spring, let's take a moment to prepare our gardens for success while being mindful of wildlife and beneficial insects.

Winter is an essential time to let our gardens rest, but it's also an opportunity to set the stage for spring. Leave some plant stems and seed heads in place; they provide shelter for overwintering insects and food for birds. Find inspiration in "["Cultivating a Wildlife Winter Wonderland"](#)" from the January 2019 issue of The Root. Mulching garden beds helps protect the soil and insulate plant roots, all while reducing the need for spring weeding. If you're tidying up fallen leaves, consider using them as mulch or adding them to your compost to recycle nutrients back into the soil.

Winter is a great time to plan for the growing season ahead. Start thinking about crop rotation, choosing native plants, and integrating pollinator-friendly blooms. Order seeds early to get your first picks, and clean your tools to ensure they're ready for the work ahead. Our ["Monthly Gardening Tips"](#) will help you plan all these important activities.

As I near the end of my term as President, I want to thank our incredible Denton County Master Gardener Association members and supporters. Your passion for sustainable gardening, commitment to education, and generosity of spirit make our mission possible. You've shared your knowledge, volunteered your time, and inspired others to grow, making a meaningful impact in our community.

Here's to a new year filled with thriving gardens and flourishing connections. Thank you for all you do—let's make this upcoming year our best!

*Cheryl*



# Gifts For Gardeners

BY JANICE YODER SMITH



What can I give my gardener friend  
To bring them joy that won't end?  
Maybe gauntlet gloves for their arms  
Protect from thorns and other harms.



Or a Hori Hori knife  
To help them dig with less strife.  
Lopping shears or pruners might  
Shape up plant parts that bring fright.



How about a hat to shade  
Their eyes and face as they spade?  
A kneeling bench might bring ease  
To stand up with aching knees.



Would they love a fun new plant?  
What about a décor ant?  
How about some native seeds  
and a garden book to read?



The gift of time could be great.  
Help them a new bed create,  
Help them gain a garden skill,  
Learn together for a thrill.

# 2025 Garden Tour Preview

*Denton, Oak Point= Four Gardens + One Community Garden*

*May 10, 2025*

*Enjoy Natives, Sun and Shade Gardens, Pollinators, Raised Vegetable Beds, Fruit Trees, Community Garden, Drainage Solutions, Artistic Gardens, Succulents, and Composting.*  
*Our Annual Garden Tour has it all. Watch for ticket information in early February.*

## *Garden Tapestry*

This is a northeast Denton home garden with modest proportions. It includes natives and ornamentals, sun and shade, perennials and annuals. Highlights include the butterfly and bee pollinator garden, shade garden, and cloistered back garden. This is managed by one person with very basic tools. Plants are chosen for texture, color, and beauty.

The Redbud tree is the traditional tree of Texas Woman's University where the homeowners have deep ties. It happily grows in the yard and even produces some volunteers. You might see a little green heart around the garden, which is a redbud baby. There are various herbs and annuals that dot the landscape and provide food and interest throughout the garden.



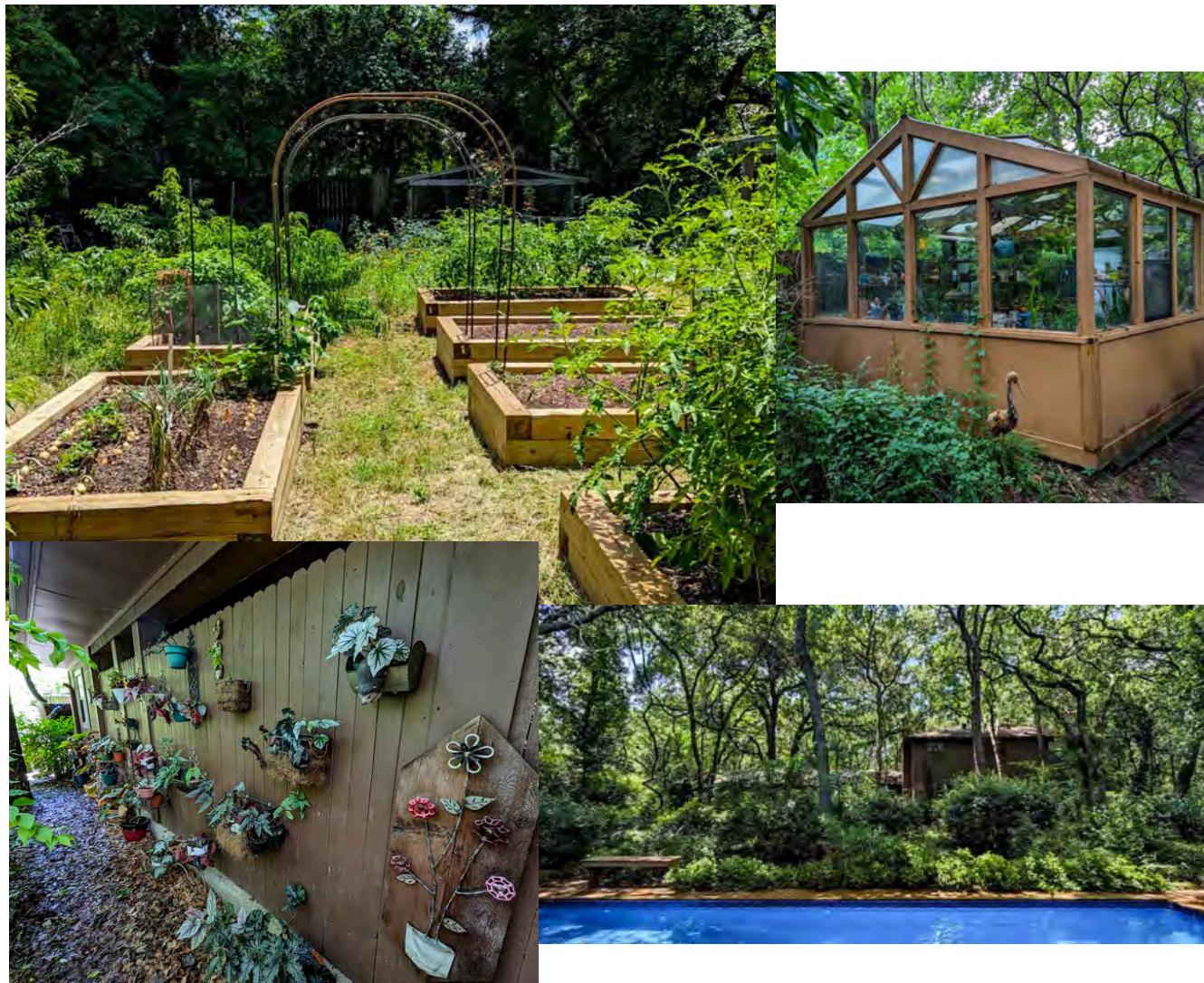
## 2025 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

### *Secluded Sanctuary*

Secluded Sanctuary provides an appreciative respite to nature in a suburban neighborhood environment. From the abundance of shady areas to the extensive use of beautiful Texas native plants, the diversity of colorful, fragrant roses, and the enjoyment of grown-at-home vegetables, Secluded Sanctuary offers exemplary demonstrations that give encouragement to both the novice and discriminating gardener.

Part of this landscape is a beautiful native groundcover, Horseherb. Once established, it spreads freely with small yellow flowers. Rabbits enjoy the tender green leaves. Showy in the spring and fall, it comes back every year.

Enjoy many flowers and wildflowers in masses, especially Spiderworts and Larkspur. They add a colorful start to spring and the warm seasons, also attracting pollinators and birds.



## 2025 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

### Windblown Wildscape

Windblown Wildscape is a one-acre shaded garden that slopes gently down to a seasonal creek which drains to Lewisville Lake. The property features curving plant beds full of groundcover and native plants, raised vegetable beds, a rain garden, fruit trees, and sunny plantings close to the house. The development of this garden began 9 years ago. It was originally sloping eroded dirt, exposed tree roots, sparse grass, and thick with greenbrier and poison ivy.

After a huge windstorm in 2024, downed trees and limbs changed part of this landscape from shade to sun, requiring the owners to rework their once shade-loving planting to more sun-tolerant plants. They repurposed much of the wood, building bench seating, pot stands, stair handrails, vine support, and a stump sculpture.

Favorite plants are the large agaves with their tropical boldness and blue color. The Papyrus is tall and striking in the rain garden. There are more than 10 varieties of groundcover that blanket the landscape and provide year-round interest.



## 2025 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

### Alice in Cactusland

Alice in Cactusland is a whimsical garden that blends art with nature, featuring a unique collection of cacti and succulents. Visitors will explore creative solutions to drainage and space issues while enjoying a delightful mix of past and present, all within an enchanting artistic setting.

People in the community drive by to see the spectacular show put on by the Peggy Martin roses. Another gorgeous rose is the Zephyrine Drouhin. It is at least 20 years old and has moved with the owners from several residences. It is huge and represents many special family memories. There are 4-5 varieties of fig trees in the orchard that supply an abundant crop each year.

It has been a “trial and error” effort. Just when a garden bed would be ready, workers would need to install a water line. Then, out of nowhere, Mother Nature would send a flood and they would have to adapt with a very different design. Nothing is as it was during their first few years.



## 2025 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

### Shiloh Field Community Garden (SFCG)

SFCG began in 2011, as the idea of Gene Gumfory, a member of Denton Bible Church, who asked the pastor to use the almost 15 acres to the south of the church to start a garden and feed hungry people. The garden is now the nation's largest community garden.

In 2023, we raised over 60,000 pounds of produce for over 20 food banks and kitchens in Denton County. Our produce is grown primarily organically and is harvested every Monday, Thursday, and Saturday and immediately delivered, farm to table.

SFCG is a completely volunteer-run, 501c3 organization with a paid garden manager. We have over 100, 4' X 25' raised beds, 2 high tunnels, chickens, nursery, barn, ~55 community plots, bees, blackberry patches and peach, plum, and pear trees, grapes, and a recycling center for local tree services that provides mulch and keeps it out of the landfill and makes a valuable addition to the garden.



## Earth-Kind Design Class

**Coming in January!**

- Looking for a gift for your favorite gardener?
- Garden Tour coming up and you need help with a redesign?
- Have problems in your landscape that need solutions?

**The EARTH-KIND® DESIGN course  
will help with that!**



**Members of the public have priority in registering for the course. Master Gardeners will be put first on a waiting list, then moved to the registration list as space permits.**

**You can register singly or with a companion working on the same design by using the QR code on the flyer on page 13.**

**EKD instructors have you covered from preparing your soil to design principles to plant selection and how to care for it all.**

**The three classes build on each other and you don't want to miss a minute! Join us and start your journey to a sustainable, easy-care, beautiful landscape!**

**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>**





### Mark Your Calendars: It will soon be time to renew your DCMGA membership for 2025!

- When: October 1 – December 15, 2024
- On-Time Renewals fee: \$20

### Procrastinators, Beware:

- Late Renewal (Dec 16 – Dec 31, 2024): Add \$15 to your fee
- Super Late Renewal (After Jan 1, 2025): A \$20 late fee is added to your renewal fee (Ouch!)

### Important:

- If you miss the December 31, 2024 deadline, your status goes Inactive on January 2, 2025.

### Stay in the Loop:

- Keep an eye on your emails and Facebook for updates from Member at Large, Raeline Nobles ([rnobles2@verizon.net](mailto:rnobles2@verizon.net)).



Membership Renewal QR Code

## Pass-Along Marking

BY LIZ MOYER

### Avoid Plant Sale Prep Horror!

We've all been there. It's time to pot up pass-alongs 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)
- The ones we think probably were candidates are still too small to be sure
- We can't remember the names of the plants, and they are too small for ID



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Liz Moyer

**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!



**Resources & Education Opportunities**  
*for Master Gardeners and the Community we serve*  
*can be found on the Calendar at*  
[Upcoming Events.](#)

*For non-DCMGA events, [Continuing Education Opportunities.](#)*

### DCMGA Members & Interns

**Plan Your Week (PYW)** has the most current VS/CE Opportunities  
and is sent via VMS every Friday.

**Denton County  
Master  
Gardener Association**  
*Upcoming Events*



**Dec 7** **Permanent Gardening Class**  
To achieve a Permanent Garden, you need to understand the elements around it and how they are connected and learn from nature by observing, engaging, and activating your "Garden Brain." Our goal is to equip you to take action with more confidence, not be afraid to explore, and become the best gardener version of yourself! Co-sponsored by Beulah Acres.  
\$25 for pre-registration, \$30 at the door. Pre-registration is highly recommended for this popular class:  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4ca5ae29a3f9c07-permanent#/>  
8AM-5PM  
Global Spheres Center 7801 S Interstate 35E, Corinth

**Dec 13** **All About Master Gardeners**  
Texas Master Gardeners receive special training and do all sorts of projects all over the counties in which they reside. From educational presentations and fairs to garden tours, plant sales, and demonstration gardens all over the county. We are here to help you build a more sustainable landscape. Come hear Cheryl Huckabee, President of the Denton County Master Gardeners, explain how to find the information you are seeking in this large and active organization.  
Denton Senior Center, 509 Bell Avenue, Denton. 9AM.

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.



### What to Plant in December

- Trees and shrubs can still be planted.
- Continue setting out your cool-season vegetable transplants. Use row cover if needed during extreme weather.
- Tulip and hyacinth bulbs, to name a few, can be planted.
- Prune fruit trees and grapes at the end of winter.

For more monthly tips:

[https://www.dcmga.com/maintain-and-solve-problems/maintain/  
monthly-gardening-tips/](https://www.dcmga.com/maintain-and-solve-problems/maintain/monthly-gardening-tips/)

Landscape Design Course Registration Opens November 25, 2024



**Learn sustainable design & installation techniques for creating or renewing your home landscape**

**Thursday & Friday, January 16 & 17, 6pm to 9pm**

**AND Saturday, January 18, 9am to 4pm.**

**(Register once for all 3 classes)**

**Denton County Elections Bldg. 701 Kimberly Drive, Denton, 76208**

**Limited class size- Individual or Companion registrations available  
Reserve your spot now!**



**Scan QR code or go  
to DCMGA.com to  
register**



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### Mission Statement

As Master Gardeners, our mission is to educate and inspire Denton County residents through research-based horticulture, to promote eco-friendly gardens and enduring landscapes that enrich our 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.

### 2024 Board of Directors

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Vice-President	Kelli Bixler
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Treasurer	Dale Powell
Communications	Judy Allen
Education	Ellen Gauntt
Outreach	Bonnie Ambrose
Member-at-Large	Raeline Nobles
Past President	Kathryn Wells

### Social Media

#### Facebook:

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

#### Instagram:

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

#### X (formerly Twitter):

<https://twitter.com/DentonCountyMGA>

#### Pinterest:

<https://www.pinterest.com/DentonCountyMGA>

#### YouTube:

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

### Save the Date

December 11 DCMGA Christmas Party, Denton Civic Center (Members Only)

January 15 DCMGA Annual Meeting & Awards Banquet, Denton Civic Center (Members Only)



### Contact Information

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Content  
The Submission deadline for the January edition of *The Root* is Sunday, December 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 [jupiterjudyjudy@gmail.com](mailto:jupiterjudyjudy@gmail.com).

Unless otherwise attributed, all photos are courtesy of Denton County MGA.