

## Denton County Master Gardener Association



## THE ROOT

Grow With Us



## Buds From The Board

BY PATTY COOKE, VICE-PRESIDENT

Happy summer to DCMGA Interns, Veteran Master Gardeners, and to our gardening community in Denton County! Summer weather arrived early this year, so by now the heat is becoming tiresome, and we're all dreaming of cooler weather and what we'll do in our gardens when we can get back out and enjoy them again. We hope you'll find some inspiration in this month's edition of *The Root*. And if you haven't surfed around on dcmga.com lately, look under the North Texas Gardening tab for some more ideas on heat-tolerant plants, water conservation, and fall vegetable gardening.

Thanks to all who participated in the 2018 Annual DCMGA Vegetable, Fruit, Herb, and Flower Show in mid-June, either as a volunteer or as a competitor. There were so many wonderful entries! Congratulations to the leadership team who made this event a success: Pam Hawkins, Debby Ishee, Joyce Yarnell-Smith, and Kaye Gross. And thank you to our community of sponsors and donors.

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## Buds from the Board (Cont.)

The Summer 2018 edition of *Denton Magazine* includes a wonderful six-page article on Denton County Master Gardeners. Titled "The Gardening Experts," it highlights a number of our major outreach projects, features some great photos, and includes quotes from interviews with several of our members. The tagline for the article reads, "Though each of the more than 270 Master Gardeners in Denton County have their own journey into horticulture, one thing they share is that gardening is more than just a past time. It is a passion."

Several stacks of *Denton Magazine* were delivered to the Extension Office; stop by and take a look!

Be sure to attend this month's DCMGA General Meeting at 10 a.m. on July 11th to hear Tammie Gurley speak on "Yard Art." During the business portion of the meeting, we'll provide details about the upcoming free DCMGA AT seminar, scheduled for Wednesday, August 29, where Master Gardeners can earn up to 6 hours of AT.

We'll also be giving a preview of a new online documentation primarily designed to benefit

project managers, but the info could be useful for anyone in our organization, especially for someone who is new.

Wishing you all a happy and safe Independence Day!

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Photo courtesy of Phyllis Minton

### Vinca

'Catharanthus roseus' - commonly referred to as periwinkle. A Texas Superstar plant.

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**TOP GARDENING TIPS**

**July**

Plan & prepare beds for fall planting.  
 Replenish mulch to suppress weeds & retain moisture.  
 Plant cover crops in bare areas of vegetable gardens.  
 Pinch back fall-blooming mums & asters; deadhead.  
 Stay cool, hydrated, & protected from the sun.

**#DCMGA #GROWWITHUS**

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION



# Help Desk Program

BY KATHY RAINEY

One of the most valuable services offered to residents by Denton County Master Gardeners is the Help Desk. Master Gardeners who volunteer on the Help Desk try to research and answer questions from the public in 24 to 36 hours. Residents may call the Help Desk and leave a detailed message on voicemail, but the best way for a resident to receive a quick answer is to submit their question by email. Pictures help tremendously; it is important to include a picture of the entire plant and the problem area. It's also helpful to include as much information as possible, such as the plant's growing conditions (sun vs shade, watering schedule, etc.), when the problem began, and any remedies used to try to address the problem.

Year to date, 395 inquiries were made to the Help Desk, with 121 just in the month of May. Most questions submitted are about trees and grass/turf, followed by pesticides/herbicides, flowers, veggies/fruit/herbs, diseases, weeds, and shrubs.

Working the Help Desk is not only an important service provided to our community, but it's also an outstanding way for Master Gardeners to expand their knowledge. Every day, our Help Desk team intercepts new or unusual issues to research. Ann Hillmann, the Help Desk/SPLASH Program Manager, can be reached at kahillmann@aol.com if you'd like more information about joining the Help Desk team. She describes the benefit to Master Gardeners as pure growth for the volunteers with very rewarding work as they help others.

Volunteering at the Help Desk earns service hours for your correspondence as well as Advanced Training hours for your research time. You can even work the Help Desk from

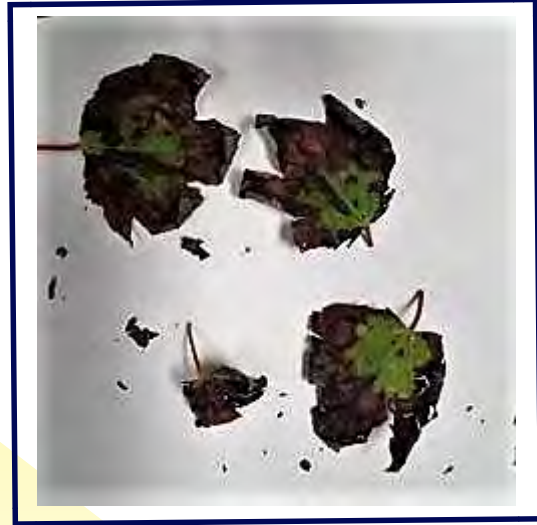


Photo courtesy of DCMGA Help Desk

## Maple Leaves

brought to the Help Desk and identified as having leaf scorch.

home once you learn the processs. All you need is a computer and keyboard skills.

SPLASH is the Help Desk's bimonthly meeting to share ideas and research techniques, and everyone is invited to attend. SPLASH meets the first Friday and third Thursday of every month to discuss unanswered resident questions, share the unusual questions, and build knowledge and confidence among new volunteers. Volunteers earn one hour of service and one hour of Advanced Training for attending each SPLASH meeting.

You can contact the Help Desk at any time by emailing [master.gardener@dentoncounty.com](mailto:master.gardener@dentoncounty.com) or by calling 940-349-2892. If there is no answer, leave a detailed message. During regular business hours, Denton County residents may bring in a sample of diseased plants or plants that need identification. The Help Desk is located in the AgriLife Office at 401 W. Hickory Street in Denton, TX.

# Jr Master Naturalist Camp

BY KAREN GIBSON

The Jr. Master Naturalist Camp is one of the many wonderful programs that falls under the banner of SWAt and is sponsored by Denton Parks & Recreation. This year's camp was held every morning, June 4-8, at North Lakes Park in Denton, for ages 6 - 11. Erin Tran was camp organizer, along with an amazing group of Master Naturalist and Master Gardener volunteers.

During the week, through hands-on activities and presentations, campers learned about the importance of stewarding soil (Texas Wildlife Association), water conservation, and prairie grasses. They learned about pollinators & wildflowers, made seed bombs, and planted Texas native shade plants in the adjacent garden.

On Fishing Day, the highlights were learning to cast a fishing rod, creating a bait ball, and actual fishing. DCMGA President Pat Moyer took the campers on a tree identification walk; they learned about fungi, observed yeast under a microscope, and created creatures from dough balls.



Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

## Locating Pollen

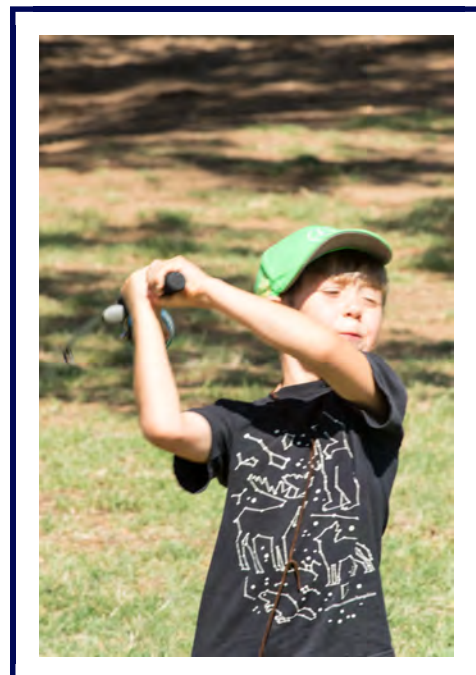


Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

## Learning to cast on Fishing Day

The last day was spent outside, first with a BioBlitz (a big hit with the campers) and then with the Raptor Guy from the Blackland Prairie Raptor Center (an even bigger hit with the campers).

During the end of camp wrap-up, when asked what they liked the most from the week, many of the kids said they loved EVERYTHING about camp this year.

Doesn't that all sound fun? I think the adult volunteers had as much fun as the campers. Jr. Master Gardener Camp is coming up in July and Beth Sharum has equally amazing programs and activities lined up for her campers. If you'd like to volunteer, it's not too late. Email Beth at [beth.sharum@verizon.net](mailto:beth.sharum@verizon.net). And next spring Erin will be sending out a call for volunteers to help with Jr. Master Naturalist Camp 2019. You won't regret answering her call.

## Meet Jean Axtell

BY GAY CAMPBELL

Jean Axtell has a naked lady in her garden. In fact, she has several. Laughingly, Jean recalls how quickly her husband came running when she first mentioned it! The South African lily, *Amaryllis belladonna*, earned its provocative nickname because it sends up a fragrant stalk of pink flowers 6-8 weeks after its winter foliage dies. I quickly decided what plant I'm bringing to the next pass-along party!

Jean is a gracious hostess and I was delighted to tour her garden. As Jean and I wandered through her backyard, I got the distinct impression that we were visiting her old friends. Although Jean introduced me to several new plants, many have lived in her garden for quite some time. One dear friend in particular, *Jacobinia*, is a flowering shrub of Brazilian ancestry. Rich pink, 2-inch tubular flowers resembling a fireworks display quickly caught my attention. *Jacobinia* flowers freely in shade and has inhabited the same pot in six of Jean's homes. Each time Jean moves, she requests cuttings of her neighbor's plants. The *Jacobinia* cutting was originally entrusted to her by an elderly neighbor many years ago. I found both *Jacobinia*'s story and her unique, tropical beauty quite intriguing.

Carefully planned and artfully executed, the Axtell backyard seems to tick all boxes. A large grassy area in the middle of the yard provides the perfect space for 13 grandchildren to play ball. Mixed beds of native and adapted plants form a portion of the perimeter. Above a white picket fence, a sturdy arbor handcrafted by Jean's husband, Alan, is home to a thriving grapevine. Along the back fence are vegetables, including several happily growing out of hay bales. A substantial tree in the far corner shades a designated play area for the grandchildren. It is here that Jean's creativity is most evident. Hanging on the fence are pots and children's



Photo courtesy of Gay Campbell

**Jean Axtell**

rubber rain boots with brightly colored flowers "growing" out of them. A recycled child's painting rescued from a Dallas elementary school provides a pop of color against the same wooden background. Adjacent to the charming play area is Alan's Garden. Comparatively speaking, Alan drew the short straw or, in this case, the small garden. Nevertheless, a Hardy Hibiscus and a Texas Star Hibiscus seem perfectly content alongside several pass-a-long plants. Finally, next to the house is Jean's "Sanctuary," a small enclosed garden that is peaceful and enchanting. Jean finds its tranquility a "welcome relief from the hustle and bustle of life." It is here that she catches "a glimpse of Heaven." With so many interesting spaces, it's no wonder that Jean Axtell's garden was chosen to be featured in this year's DCMGA Garden Tour. Unable to attend, I was honored to be given a private tour by the gardener herself.



## Meet Jean Axtell (Cont.)

New to DCMGA, I was excited to learn how many outstanding members DCMGA attracts. Each individual is more unique than the next. Almost all of us have varied and interesting backgrounds, most of which have nothing to do with horticulture. As a single mom, Jean worked in a doctor's office and raised two children on her own. Eventually, she married Alan, forming a blended family of seven.

When I decided to interview her, I had no idea Jean is a working model represented by the prestigious Kim Dawson Modeling Agency. She is currently modeling in two TV commercials, as well as print ads. Jean uses her earnings to fund several yearly trips to Haiti, which leads me to the reason I requested an interview with Jean in the first place.

About three years ago, Jean and several friends traveled to Haiti to visit the areas hardest hit by the devastating earthquake of 2010. Their primary mission was to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition, they hoped to find a way to connect with the villagers and establish an ongoing relationship. One approach was to see if they could interest female villagers to learn hand embroidery as a way to provide potential income for their families. Due to the earthquake, most of the families in the area lost homes, jobs, and loved ones.

Fast forward 3 years. Jean and her team now have about 120 Haitian women (and some men) who supplement their yearly income by designing and embroidering beautiful pieces of art. This was accomplished through training, persistence, and hard work from both the US team and the Haitian villagers. Each embroidered piece requires 100-400 hours to complete. Once a piece meets the standard of quality that the team expects, it is taken back to the US to sell. One hundred percent of the

profits are returned to each seamstress, allowing them to provide food, education, and medical help for their children. A dedicated embroiderer has the potential to contribute as much as \$750 to the family's annual income. \$750 may not seem like a lot of money to us, but to the Haitians, whose annual family income is about \$450, it is life-changing.

Jean and her team call their organization "Mercy's Threads," and their ultimate goal is to enable Haitian villagers to become self-sustaining. Last year, an opportunity arose allowing some of the embroidery pieces to be sold locally in Haiti. The team is prayerful that similar opportunities will present themselves. In the meantime, Jean and her team make several trips each year to Haiti, mentoring the villagers and bringing their exquisite wares back to the US for sale.

Despite severe loss and hardship, most of the Haitians that Jean meets are joyful souls. Exuberant smiles beam from the photos Jean shares with me. Some of their personalities literally jump off the page. It's impossible not to be affected by the inner strength and determination that shines forth from each lovely face. I can feel the beauty and personality of the embroiderer reflected back at me when I inspect each colorful, happy, and intricately sewn piece of art. I whip-stitched two of the pieces I bought from Jean onto colorful outdoor pillows and placed them on a bench in my garden. They are waterproof and weatherproof and every time I see them, I smile and count my many blessings. The third piece will be sent to my aunt who spent many years in Central and South America. Although my aunt is an excellent seamstress, sewing skills are not necessary to appreciate the unique workmanship and the incredible mission of Mercy's Threads.



Photo courtesy of Sarah Hendel

### A Bounty of Beautiful Entries

in the Adult Vegetable category await the judges at DCMGA's annual Vegetable, Fruit, Flower, and Herb Show.



Photo courtesy of Kathryn Wells

### Youth Grand Champion Winner

Abigale Philpott received \$150 cash for her delicious tomatoes at the June 16th DCMGA Vegetable, Fruit, Flower, & Herb Show.

## 2018 Junior Master Gardener Specialist Training

BY SUE HUDIBURGH

Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Master Wellness volunteers, 4H volunteers, and AgriLife Extension agents are invited to attend the 2018 Junior Master Gardener® (JMG) Specialist Training hosted by DCMGA on July 24-26, 2018, at Global Spheres Center in Corinth. This 2-1/2 day class is designed for those who are coordinating or supporting JMG programs at the local, county, and regional level. Come join us to learn new ideas and techniques that will help you implement effective youth gardening programs through JMG. For more information and online registration, visit our website at [www.dcmga.com](http://www.dcmga.com), or visit this direct link to our Junior Master Gardener Specialist Training page: <https://dcmga.com/events/2018-junior-master-gardener-specialist-training/>.



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# Superstars Defy Texas Heat

BY LEE ANN YATES

Here we are in July, the part of summer when the Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive" becomes every gardener's earwig. Texas Superstar® plants can help our gardens stay alive as the blast furnace revs up. According to the Texas Superstar information brochure, Superstars are a group of plants that undergo "several years of extensive field trials by Texas A&M AgriLife Research and the TAMU AgriLife Extension Service" across Texas. These plants have to show superior performance under the tough growing conditions in Texas, while receiving "minimal soil preparation, reasonable levels of water and no pesticides."

Members of an executive board, advised by horticultural professionals and landscape designers, decide which plants are chosen as Superstars. They have to perform well in a variety of landscapes, be easily marketable, and be producible in sufficient numbers to meet consumer demand. Once a plant meets

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Photo courtesy of Karen Gibson

**John Fanick Phlox**

'Phlox paniculata'

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these requirements, they get stamped with the Superstar label.

Because of the demanding trials, Texas Superstars are widely adapted across the state. They are rated by cold hardiness zone – the coldest places for which they are adapted. Some are labeled as being deer-resistant and many are also pollinator friendly. Superstar status has been given for annuals, perennials, woody shrubs including roses, trees, and some yummy edibles. Where to start?

Celebrate the red, white, and blue with 'Tidal Wave Cherry' Petunias (*Petunia x hybrida* 'Tidal Wave Cherry'), Cape Plumbago (*Plumbago ariculata*), and 'White Stream' Alyssum (*Lobulria* 'White Stream').

Perhaps go pink, purple, and yellow using Butterfly Deep Pink Pentas (*Pentas lanceolata*), purple Trailing Lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*), and Texas Gold Columbine (*Aquilegia chrysantha* var. *hinckleyana* 'Texas Gold').

Interested in foliage plants? Try purpley-bronze 'Princess Caroline' Napier Grass (*Pennisetum x* 'Princess Caroline'), hot pink to red 'Brazilian Red Hots' Alternanthera or Joseph's Coat (*Alternanthera dentate* 'Brazilian Red Hots'), or Variegated Tapioca (*Manihot esculenta* 'Variegata'), a tropical chartreuse/yellow leaved beauty grown as an annual in most of Texas.

Looking for edibles that can stand up to our climate? Check out 'Arctic Frost' Satsuma (*Citrus reticulata* 'Arctic Frost'), 'Natchez' Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* 'Natchez'), 'Green Magic' Broccoli (*Brassica oleracea* 'Green Magic'), and 'Dwarf Cherry Surprise' tomatoes, also known as 'BHN 968' tomatoes (*Solanum lycopersicum* 'BHN968').

<https://dcmga.com/>



## Superstars Defy Texas Heat (Cont.)

Not enough room to list them all here, but there are so many more Superstars available to keep your garden "stayin' alive" in mid-summer. Be sure to look for the Texas Superstar logo on plant tags. A list of nurseries that carry Texas Superstar plants is under the Retailers tab on the Texas Superstars website at <http://texassuperstar.com/index.html>.

A full color brochure is also available online at [http://texassuperstar.com/press/superstar\\_brochure\\_2016.pdf](http://texassuperstar.com/press/superstar_brochure_2016.pdf).

"Whether you're a brother, or whether you're a mother" or a sister or a dad or however you identify – you can successfully garden in July's heat with Texas Superstars!

Happy Independence Day, gardeners! May you continue to enjoy surprises in your gardens long after the fireworks have faded.

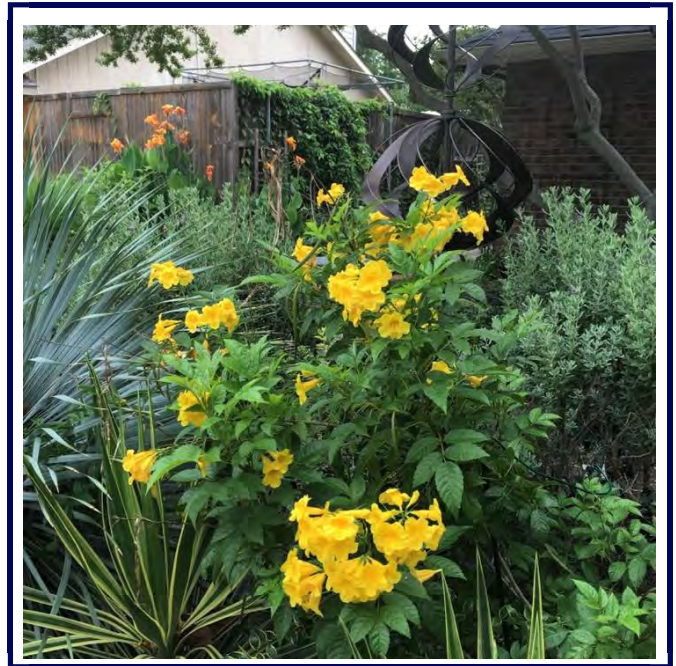


Photo courtesy of Christy Gonz Hodges

### Gold Star Esperanza

'Tecoma stans'

## DCMGA Awarded Texas Program of the Year

BY KATHRYN WELLS



### Keeping Texas Beautiful

are (from left to right): DCMGA Member Tracy Durmick, DCMGA Communications Director Kathryn Wells, KTB Executive Director Suzanne Kho, Texas A&M Denton County AgriLife Horticulture Agent Janet Laminack, and DCMGA Member Kathy Rainey.

Denton County Master Gardener Association (DCMGA) received the Civic Organization Program of the Year award at Keep Texas Beautiful's (KTB) 51st annual conference, held June 11-13, 2018 in Georgetown, Texas.

The KTB Awards recognize the efforts of individuals, businesses, media outlets, government agencies, youth, educators, and education organizations that make efforts to enhance their community and protect the Lone Star State.

This year's conference theme was "Creating Community." Thank you, Keep Texas Beautiful, for the recognition, and thank you, Keep Denton Beautiful, for the nomination; what a beautiful community we serve!

# Planning a Fall Vegetable Garden

BY BARBARA BROWN

Too hot to stay outside in the garden very long? Even inveterate North Texas gardeners want to hide indoors from the intense and prolonged summer heat. However, we do not stop thinking about our vegetable garden. So, what gardening activity can you do in July? How about planning your fall vegetable garden?

Growing your favorite vegetables in the fall offers several advantages over spring vegetable gardening including:

- Fewer bugs as the weather cools
- Less frequent damaging weather
- Leafy greens are slower to bolt from the heat
- As days get shorter, many vegetable crops store more sugar and have better flavor than spring-grown crops



Swiss chard

## *Create a plan*

You can plan a garden layout using one of several online applications or with pencil and graft paper while sitting in air-conditioned comfort. The University of Illinois Extension Services offers an evaluation of several online gardening and garden planning applications for you to check out.

To match plants to your space, measure the size of the area and note the availability of sunlight, remembering that sun angles change in fall and winter and days become shorter. Consider the types of plants you want to grow, the sun light and space requirements of those plants, and the size of the gardening area. Lay out the blank garden space for your plan.

## *Decide what to plant*

If this is your first fall vegetable garden, choose plants that produce edible roots, tubers, and leaves. Plants that need flowers to produce fruit can be challenging to grow successfully in cooler weather, but chances of success with tomatoes and peppers, for example, improve by choosing the right variety and planting during the optimum times.

Select vegetables you will eat. Yes, you can grow Brussels sprouts in North Texas. But, if no one in your family will eat them, you may not want to use up space. If you still want to sneak in some healthy Brussels sprouts, consider serving it a new way such as roasting, stir-frying with other vegetables, or sprinkling roasted sprouts with Parmesan cheese or dried cranberries.

In a fall vegetable garden, you can grow pole or bush beans, chard, lettuce, spinach, and many other family favorites. See Resources below for websites to help select the best varieties to grow in North Texas. And, don't forget herbs. Cool-season herbs including parsley, dill, cilantro, sage, and thyme



## Planning a Fall Vegetable Garden (Cont.)

can be planted in the fall. They will tolerate frost and even a light freeze, adding flavor to your cooking well into winter.

### *When to plant*

Some vegetables are best started from seed while others prefer a head start with transplants. If you are itching to get your fingers into soil and work with plants even in the summer, consider starting some plants indoors. Vegetables that do best when added as transplants include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, eggplant, leeks, peppers, squash, and tomatoes. Maturing from seed to transplant worthy seedlings usually takes about 6 weeks. However, read the seed package for recommendations on timing or size for specific vegetables.



**Cabbage**

### *Resources*

Vegetable Variety Selector by County:

[http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/publications/veg\\_variety/](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/publications/veg_variety/)

Vegetable Varieties for North Central Texas:

<http://agrifecdn.tamu.edu/urbantarranthorticulture/files/2010/06/Vegetable-Varieties-for-North-Central-Texas-1.pdf>

Integrated Pest Management Guidelines for Texas:

<http://vegetableipm.tamu.edu/>

Recommended Planting Dates:

[http://agrifecdn.tamu.edu/urbantarranthorticulture/files/2010/06/Recommended\\_Planting\\_Dates\\_for\\_North\\_Texas1.pdf](http://agrifecdn.tamu.edu/urbantarranthorticulture/files/2010/06/Recommended_Planting_Dates_for_North_Texas1.pdf)



If you have questions about growing vegetables or any other horticulture-related subjects, please contact our Master Gardener Help Desk at 940.349.2892 or [master.gardener@dentoncounty.com](mailto:master.gardener@dentoncounty.com); it's free of charge, and it's our pleasure to assist you.



# Leach Teaching Garden Grand Opening

BY LIZ MOYER

Friday, June 15, Pat and Liz Moyer were honored to represent DCMGA at the grand opening of the Leach Teaching Garden on the Texas A&M campus in College Station. DCMGA donated \$3000 towards this first phase of the 40-acre project. This phase included seven acres of gardens as well as stabilization of White Creek, the construction of two bridges that now connect the AgriLife Services and the Wildlife, Fisheries and Ecological Sciences Buildings to the rest of this sprawling campus, and a beautiful overlook near the creek.

The Garden is envisioned as an iconic place that will bring together research, teaching, and extension education and help people reconnect with nature. This phase includes twenty-one distinct garden areas, as well as fourteen hardscape features. Of special interest to us was the Texas Master Gardeners Earth-Kind® Garden – funded by 74 Master Gardener Associations across the state!

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Photo courtesy of Liz Moyer

## Leach Teaching & Public Garden

There is truly something for everyone in this inspiring space. Additional gardens on the campus include:

- German and Czech Heritage Garden
- Fruit Orchard
- The Sharon & Kelly Burt Family Homestead Garden
- Stephens Family Texas Superstar® Garden
- Butterfly and Bee Garden
- Leach Vineyard
- Edna Fuchs Memorial Rose Bed
- Mexican Heritage Garden
- Herb Garden
- Citrus Grove
- Eleanor & Curtis Tabor '62 Vegetable Farm Garden
- Bird Garden
- Bethancourt Family Kitchen Garden
- Landmark Nurseries Tree Park
- Morris & Lydia Norman Pecan Bottom
- Harriet & Joe B. Foster '56 Maroon and White Garden
- Food and Fiber Fields – anchored by a center-pivot irrigation system
- Mary Helyn's Rain Garden
- Dr. Sam Cotner '64 Memorial Floral Border
- Bioswale

The gardens are open to visitors dawn to dusk every day and are free to the public! We invite you to visit this wonderful space any time you are in the College Station area.

More info is available at:

<https://gardens.tamu.edu/gardens/teaching-gardens-complex/>

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<https://dcmga.com/>

# Plan Now to Divide & Transplant Your Iris in September

BY PATTY COOKE

My bearded iris have hardly bloomed the last two years. From research, I know the most likely reasons are overcrowding and not enough sun. As they are close to the house on the north side and shaded by a tree, they don't get much sun until after bloom season. I knew I needed to divide them last fall, but I also knew I needed to move them and hadn't prepared a new location where they would receive more sun.

July is not the time for this gardener to be digging a new flower bed, but it is a good time to plan the new location in order to be ready to divide and transplant your iris in the fall. One method to prepare a new area is solarization, which involves laying clear plastic sheeting over an area during the hottest part of summer for at least a month. The sun heats the soil to temperatures that kill bacteria, fungi, insects, nematodes, mites, weeds, and weed seeds. Because solarization kills all organisms, you must add compost into your area before planting.



Photo courtesy of Patty Cooke

## Prepping Your Iris Bed

can begin with summer planning in the climate-controlled comfort of your home.

Another method is cardboard sheet mulching, which involves laying cardboard or multiple layers of newspaper over the area and covering it with mulch or other organic material. Ideally, you would allow six months or more to give the cardboard time to completely smother all the grass and weeds and decompose. But even after two to three months, the cardboard can be removed, and the vegetation will be significantly weakened and easier to remove. The remaining mulch can be pulled aside and reused on top of the new planting or mixed into the soil along with compost and other amendments as needed.

The best time to divide and/or transplant iris is September. Before digging the rhizomes (roots), cut the leaves back to about one-third of their full height. Dig under a clump of rhizomes and lift out the whole clump at once. Cut the rhizomes into sections containing 1 – 3 buds. Each division must have at least one growing point (or fan of leaves), a few inches of healthy rhizome, and a number of well-developed roots. When dividing and replanting, use only the strong, healthy rhizomes for planting; discard diseased and stunted plants. If you accidentally cut into a diseased rhizome, disinfect your pruning shears with a solution of one part household bleach to nine parts water.

Plant iris in a sunny, well-drained area with good circulation around the plants to prevent diseases. If the soil is poorly drained, consider using raised beds, since iris will rot in poorly drained soils. After planting, water the bed thoroughly to settle the soil around the roots. Usually, little additional moisture is required unless a prolonged drought occurs.

## Iris Resources

### Solarization Information & Instructions:

[https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/files/2013/09/soil\\_solarization.pdf](https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/files/2013/09/soil_solarization.pdf)

### Sheet Mulching Information & Instructions:

<http://publicgarden.ucdavis.edu/public-garden/lawn-break-up>

### Dividing Iris Information:

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/flowers/iris.html>



**BY CINDY HIEGEL**

*I started composting last September. I filled it with 3/4 kitchen scraps and 1/4 yard debris. Pretty much everything is still recognizable. What am I doing wrong?*

Here are some basic composting issues that you may need to address:

1. Your mix may be too dry. It should be moist, not wet. Break down of components will not occur if the mix is dry.
2. Your compost mix may not be ideal. As a rule of thumb, carbon:nitrogen ratio should be 30:1. Food scraps and grass

clippings are nitrogen sources. Carbon sources are paper, yard waste, tree leaves, and wood shavings.

3. Your mix may benefit from adding store bought compost activator, compost, or horse manure to kick start the process. This adds vital microorganism culture as well as nitrogen.

This article will give you an idea of how to estimate the carbon:nitrogen ratio:

<https://agriflifeextension.tamu.edu/browse/featured-solutions/gardening-landscaping/composting/>





# Vegetable, Fruit, Herb, & Flower Show

BY KATHRYN WELLS

This year's Vegetable, Fruit, Herb, and Flower Show produced a diversity of 112 total entries with seven grand winners sharing cash prizes totaling \$800.

Numerous ribbons were awarded as well as seven grand ribbons with a monetary purse for the three best entries in the adult division, the three best entries in the youth division, and the overall best in show entry.

Congratulations to the following "Big Three" winners: Best in Show: Janet Gershenfeld (Peaches); Grand Champion Adult: Meg Cochran (Lavender); Grand Champion Youth: Abigale Philpott (Tomatoes).

Other winners include: Reserve Grand Champion Adult: Janet Gershenfeld (Buddleia); Reserve Grand Champion Youth:



## Texas A&M's Denton County AgriLife

Extension Horticulture Agent Janet Laminack (left) and Show Manager Pam Hawkins (right) present Janet Gershenfeld with her awards including Reserve Grand Champion for her floral entry in the Adult category and Best in Show for her peaches.

Bibi Arenas (Onions); First Runner Up Adult: Dana Bays (Tomatoes); First Runner Up Youth: Tallinn Dear (Kale).

Thanks to our great partners, generous donors, skilled judges, and energetic volunteers who all contributed to the success of this year's show. Most of all, we want to thank our wonderful community for your support. We appreciate you and are grateful that you shared your harvest with us!

Please make plans to join us for next year's show (3rd Saturday of June, Father's Day weekend).



## Adult Grand Champion

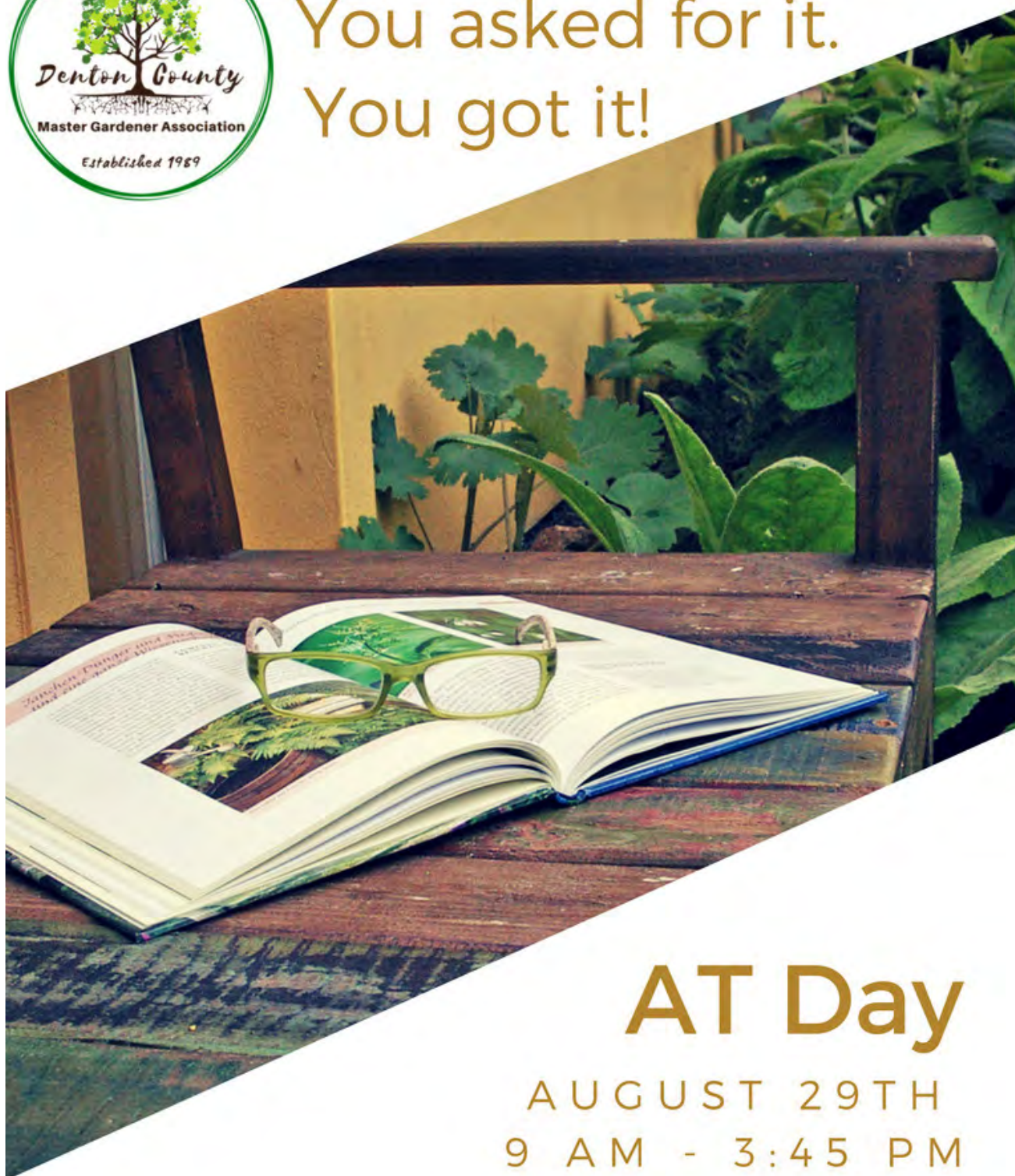
Meg Cochran and her son, Francis, pose with her winning lavender entry. Meg shared that the win is especially sweet as she is a relatively new gardener ... and her mother's last name is Lavender.

*In partnership with: City of Denton Economic Development Program & Denton County Historical Society.*

*Cash awards donated by: Charlie Becks Garage; Dennis' Farm Store; The Florist, Ltd.; Harold's Transmissions, Inc.; Marvin's Automotive; Tommy's Hi Tech Automotive; Ultimutt Grooming; and Zenith Dry Cleaners.*



You asked for it.  
You got it!



## AT Day

AUGUST 29TH

9 AM - 3:45 PM

**UP TO SIX HOURS OF AT CREDIT.  
MIX & MATCH, OR TAKE THEM ALL!**



TEXAS A&M  
**AGRI**LIFE  
EXTENSION

JOSEPH A. CARROLL BUILDING  
401 W. HICKORY STREET, DENTON





TEXAS A&M  
AGRILIFE  
EXTENSION

### 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.

### 2018 Board of Directors

|                         |                    |
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| President               | Pat Moyer          |
| Vice President          | Patty Cooke        |
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### Social Media

#### Facebook:

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

#### Instagram:

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

#### Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/MGsDentonTX>

#### Pinterest:

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

### Save the Date

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| August 28–<br>October 2: | Design Your Yard<br>with<br>Earth-Kind<br>Landscaping Course |
| August 29                | AT Day   |
| October 13:              | Fall Garden Festival   |
| October 17:              | Prospective Intern<br>Round Up Open House                    |

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### Content

Submission deadline for the July edition of *The Root* is Monday, July 16. 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](mailto:karenhoot19@gmail.com) or Communications Director Kathryn Wells at [kathrynwells333@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynwells333@gmail.com).