

Denton County Master Gardener Association



THE ROOT

Grow With Us



Buds From The Board

BY PAT MOYER, PRESIDENT

Summer greetings to master gardeners, interns and all visitors. We are in a “good news, bad news” time of year. The good news is that the hot part of the year is over. The bad news is that we’ve now entered the *really hot* part of the year. In August, we watch our gardens fight to remain green and viable, while we start looking forward to what will do well in the fall.

During this lull, consider some activities that are ongoing through the summer. Green Acres, Fair Oaks, FMFB Community Garden, and LLELA all have weekly programs that continue meeting and working throughout the summer months. All of them have activities that are morning-oriented to avoid the heat of the afternoon, and all would appreciate any MG/intern help.

WHAT'S GROWING ON

-
- 03 Project Spotlight: SWAt
 - 06 Meet a Member: The Alexanders
 - 07 Plant of the Month: Ferns
 - 09 Feature Article: Turf Grass, An Intern's Journey
 - 12 Help Desk Q & A: Hot Water(ing)

Cover photo courtesy of Lea Watson
North Lakes Park, Jr Master Naturalist Camp

CONNECT WITH US ON THE WEB
<https://dcmga.com>

Buds from the Board (Cont.)

For those of you who would rather not lather up with sunscreen to earn your service hours, please consider volunteering with the DCMGA Help Desk. Participation in this program is a win-win for DCMGA. Master gardeners and interns provide horticulture-related information to the citizens of Denton County (and elsewhere in the surrounding area) while expanding their own knowledge by participating in the Help Desk process.

If you have not had the opportunity to participate in one of the Splash meetings, you really need to go. You will come away with a deeper appreciation of our members' knowledge base. Additionally, some of the Splash sessions include AT hours on special topics. Check the calendar and PYW for Splash dates.

For those of you still on the lookout for those "elusive" AT hours, DCMGA has another great opportunity. Kim Wootton, our super Director of Education, has coordinated our first AT Day, which offers an opportunity for members to earn up to six hours of AT credit (half of the annual 12-hour member requirement). Kim has scheduled a series of classes throughout the day on Wednesday, August 29, at the Carroll Building.

Due to seating limitations, registration through Signup Genius is required. [Note: Classes are free!]

One last – but certainly not least – opportunity is the Gardenscapers "Design Your Yard" class, which starts on August 28th and runs through October 6th. It's sure to get you ready for spring planting. Check the website for details.

Happy Gardening!



Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

The JMNA 2018 Summer Camp

volunteer crew celebrates another successful session with Camp Coordinator Beth Sharum.

TOP GARDENING TIPS

August

Collect seeds from summer-blooming plants.
Research native wildflower mixes for fall planting.
Plan & prepare beds for fall planting.
Replenish mulch to suppress weeds & retain moisture.
Stay cool, hydrated, & protected from the sun.

#DCMGA #GROWWITHUS

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Science With Attitude (SWAt)

BY MARION ARNDT

Comprised of volunteers from Denton County Master Gardeners, Elm Fork Chapter Texas Master Naturalists, and Denton County 4-H, the Science With Attitude (SWAt) program is a unique, year-round educational outreach program, integrating horticulture, environmental science and wildlife education.



SWAt's volunteer teams provide assistance with planning and supporting schools in developing school gardens and outdoor learning centers. Its Junior Master Gardener (JMG) and Junior Master Naturalist (JMN) programs provide the opportunity for students to get outdoors, enhancing their appreciation for the environment and nature. Partnering with Denton County Parks and Recreation, SWAt assists in developing, implementing, and staffing programs for both JMG and JMN classes as well as summer camps.

Through SWAt's online request system, local school district educators, home schoolers, and community events organizers can request a talk or demo on a variety of topics including plant growth and development, ecology, environmental science, and discovering wildlife. These stand-alone curriculum enrichment opportunities are volunteer-led to support topics that are being taught in the classroom. These offerings are free of charge, and SWAt provides all supplies and lesson plans.

SWAt's commitment to the community is consistent and far-reaching. It includes:

- Training educators and parent volunteers from Denton County public, private, and home-based education programs to use JMG researched-based curricula, which align with state standards in math, science, and reading.
- Providing individualized horticultural and environmental science supplemental education in the classroom and other educational settings.
- Holding monthly Junior Master Gardener and Junior Master Naturalist Preschool Classes at Denia Recreation Center in Denton, providing hands-on educational activities for area preschoolers.
- Offering week-long Junior Master Gardener and Junior Master Naturalist summer camps through Denia Recreation Center for 6 to 11 year-old youth.
- Providing live demos and information booths at local fairs, school science expos, libraries, and other community venues.
- Coordinating program activities and volunteer opportunities for the Kids Zone at DCMGA's annual Fall Festival.
- Conducting summer Professional Development Workshops for educators.
- Planning and maintaining the Junior Master Gardener Children's Garden at Global Spheres Center in Corinth.

Last year, SWAt volunteers visited thirty schools and provided educational outreach for twenty community events reaching approximately 2,800 youth and 950 adults.

Science With Attitude (Cont.)



Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

JMN 2018 Summer Campers

gather with Camp Coordinator Erin Tran.

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and which was recently incorporated as a permanent Elm Fork Chapter project. Each year, over 4,000 second and fourth grade students visit the Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center on school field trips. Volunteers provide a combination of indoor and outdoor education stations with service opportunities for Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners of varied talents and activity levels. Students and teachers alike have expressed great positive feedback.

Because SWAt is a year-round program, volunteer recruitment is always a priority. There is a tremendous need for SWAt educators—volunteers who enjoy working with children and are comfortable in a classroom setting. The Inventory Team, led by Patti Barry, stocks and maintains the activity kits and demo models that are used in the classroom and for community events. These are

...I just wanted to thank you again for all of your help coordinating programs for our library during the past spring and fall. Every single program -- worm composting, berry gardening, honey bees, and grow cards -- was excellent. The content for all of the programs was informative and interesting, and all of the volunteer presenters were friendly, knowledgeable, and wonderful to work with. I received great positive feedback from attendees at every event. I hope you and the presenters know how much your time and generosity are appreciated!

Carole Chandler

Lewisville Public Library

In 2016, SWAt was awarded Second Place, Youth Category Programming, by the International Master Gardeners' Search for Excellence. In collaboration with Denia Recreation Center in Denton, the Junior Master Gardener and Junior Master Naturalist summer camp programs (developed, implemented and staffed by SWAt volunteers) received the 2017 Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS) Award for Excellence in Programming.

SWAt volunteers also support the Elm Fork Chapter Texas Master Naturalists DISD School Days at Clear Creek, which the Master Naturalist Intern Class of 2017 initiated as their class project

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Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

JMG 2018 Summer Campers

enjoy their lessons in the garden with Camp Coordinator Beth Sharum.

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Science With Attitude (Cont.)

grab-n-go kits, which contain lesson plans and all the materials necessary for presentations, thereby minimizing the prep time for our volunteer instructors.

For those not comfortable teaching or working with children, or for those who prefer to work behind the scenes or from home, volunteers are also needed for hospitality, tech support, school advisors, inventory team, photography, administration, volunteer recruitment, and support teams for Junior Master Gardener (JMG) and Junior Master Naturalist (JMN) classes and summer camps.

If you would like to learn more about SWAt, the team extends a personal invitation for you to join them at their monthly planning meeting, which is held on the 4th Thursday of each month beginning at 9:30 a.m. A one-hour business meeting is followed by one hour of approved Advanced Training for both Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. These trainings focus primarily on the activity kits and demo models SWAt uses in the community. Meetings are held at the Joseph A. Carroll Building, 401 W. Hickory Street, Denton. Check Plan Your Week for upcoming meetings.

For more information on SWAt, visit our web page at dcmga.com/all-about-dcmga/swat-science-with-attitude-educational-outreach, or contact Marion Arndt at sciencewithattitude@gmail.com.



Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

The Stream Trailer Demonstration

(led here by MN & DCMGA Director of Education Kim Wootton) is always a hit with the campers.



Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

DCMGA President Pat Moyer

leads a tree identification walk for the 2018 JMN summer campers.



Meet Gloria & Jerry Alexander

BY GAY CAMPBELL

Q: What did you do prior to becoming Master Gardeners?

A: Gloria taught school and worked for GTE before retirement. Jerry worked in Human Services including MHMR, casefile auditing, training, and HR before retiring after thirty-eight years of service. We started at the age of two, which was supposed to have been legal in Arkansas. Too late to file charges now!

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Q: How long have you been in Texas?

A: We graduated college and married at a young age. We have two daughters and no grandchildren. We have asked both children not to bring us a grandbaby without a good husband.

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Q: How did you get involved in gardening?

A: Being from Arkansas, we were surrounded by many small and large garden plots. It was truly a food source. People were basically poor but had clean, well-kept lawns and gardens. We learned the meaning of "Pass-Along Gardens" because neighbors shared flowers and food in abundance. We have always tried to maintain a beautiful lawn, and we had a large vegetable garden until we downsized after retirement.

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Q: How long have you two been Master Gardeners?

A: After Jerry's retirement in 2014, we both entered the 2015 class.

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Q: What plants do you like to grow?

A: Herbs and other native plants. Jerry likes Strawberry Mint, and Gloria likes Peppermint. We also have several native plants.



Photo courtesy of Jerry Alexander

Jerry & Gloria Alexander

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Gardening, of course, and traveling when we can get it scheduled.

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Q: What gardening challenges have you experienced?

A: We have several wet spots in our lawn, but we wanted roses and vines in those areas. We could not add soil to raise those areas, so we literally scraped the grass away, took the plants out of the pots, set the ball on top of the ground, mounded soil around them, wrapped with landscape fabric, and mulched. The plants were not water logged and have done really well with the exception of one rose that had Rose Rosette. We think we transferred it from S.E.'s garden, since we have to blame it on someone. She will understand. Lol!

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Q: What have you learned along the way?

A: We have learned that just because you love plants and a beautiful lawn, you can not buy all of them.

Plant of the Month - Ferns!

BY LEE ANN YATES

Alrighty, folks, let's talk "cool" – as in airy, feathery, shady cool! I'm talking FERNs! Ferns call to mind misty forests, deep shade, and cool – not what one usually associates with North Central Texas in August. Good news! There are three ferns recommended for our area by TAMU AgriLife Extension on their Top 100 Plants list. Ferns for full shade to sunny areas are included, so there's something for every place in your landscape.

Wavy Cloak Fern (*Astrolepis sinuata*) is a semi-evergreen, slow-growing perennial with a 1' x 2' mature spread. This West Texas native, a member of the Maidenhair Fern family, makes a wonderful accent or border plant. Green on top and cinnamon-hued underneath, the fronds like full sun, but the roots like to stay shaded in rocky or sandy well-drained soil. Wavy Cloak Fern is drought-tolerant and has a decent level of cold tolerance once established – just protect it from freezing.

Southern Wood Ferns (*Thelypteris* spp.) are larger – 2' x 3' – when mature and grow slightly faster than Wavy Cloak Ferns. If they are really happy, they can reach 5'. They are semi-evergreen, have low water requirements, and tolerate six or more hours of sun to part shade. Wood Ferns thrive in moist sandy, loam, or clay soils and even accept areas with slow drainage (consider them for rain gardens?). These native perennials also have high deer resistance. The lime or yellow-green fronds turn to bronze in cooler weather. West of east Texas, this fern is called River Fern because it is only found near bodies of water. East of central Texas, it is found in moist woods and called Wood Fern.

If you have a very shady place in your garden, Holly Fern (*Cyrtomium falcatum*) is at home in part to full shade. This glossy, dark green beauty grows at a moderate rate and has low to medium water needs. It matures to 2' x 3'. Resistant to deer and rabbits, Holly Fern is also salt-tolerant and does well in containers, making it a very versatile plant. While not native to Texas, this fern has adapted well, but it needs more water than the other two. It likes moist, humus-y, well-drained soil (very important to avoid root rot and fungus problems) that doesn't completely dry out between waterings. Holly Fern is cold hardy in our part of Texas, but needs protection from freezing temperatures.

All of these Texas ferns are suitable for mass plantings, wall or walk bordering, or specimen plantings in your landscape. Ferns allow an opportunity to focus on texture as an accent in the garden. Plant ferns alongside others with contrasting textures like hostas, oakleaf hydrangeas, leopard plants, brunneras, false aralias, saxifragas, or heucheras. Banks of colored flowers – white, purple, orange, yellow – would be especially attractive with Southern Wood Ferns or Wavy Cloak Ferns as a backdrop.

However you use ferns in your landscape, they will bring a sense of cool airiness and loads of texture to your space. And at this point in the year, shouldn't we take cool and airy wherever we can find it? Stay cool, gardeners!

Sources:

- Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
<https://www.wildflower.org/>
- TAMU AgriLife Extension Top 100 Plants for North Texas
<https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/blog/2015/08/06/top-100-plants-for-north-texas/>

John Ridings Memorial Summary

Fellow DCMGA Members,

Earlier this year, I notified the membership of a plan to honor and remember John Ridings, a member of DCMGA and the husband of Denton County AgriLife Extension Horticulture Agent Janet Laminack. DCMGA members responded in their usual "over-the-top" manner.

Our goal was to have a tree with a plaque recognizing John on the UNT campus where he worked. The cost for that was \$1500. We hoped that we could fund that and have some amount left over to contribute to some charities John had an interest in.

Our final results were well beyond my comprehension. We received about \$3900 in total donations. This allowed us to fund the tree and plaque at UNT, as well as provide donations of over \$1200 to each of John's suggested charities, Monsignor King Outreach Center and the Denton Animal Support Foundation.

Thanks to all of you who contributed. I take pride in being associated with an organization that supports our members.

Regards,
Pat Moyer

Beehive Removal Assistance

The Denton Beekeepers Association has updated their contact preferences for beehive removal assistance. The fastest method of contact is to email board@dentonbees.com, an account that is monitored by several individuals, who will forward assistance requests to the appropriate people, depending on where the hive is located and who might be available. The secondary point of contact is Judy Austin at 469-400-4600, who will relay the request information to others who may be able to help with the removal.

Please include the following information to expedite your request: contact name, phone number, address where the colony is located, and where the hive is located at that address (tree, building, soffit, etc).



Turf Grass - An Intern's Journey

BY CINDY HELM

When I started the Master Gardener class, I told myself that I was going to try and implement each lesson that applied to my landscape. I will admit that when the subject of turf grass came up, I was a little underwhelmed. It's grass for the love of Pete. Who really cares? Well, let me tell you this much - I care, and this is my story.

It was a rainy Tuesday as I made my way to intern class on March 27. I thought to myself, "I am most certainly going to want to sleep this whole day." After all, it was a rainy day, and we were going to talk turf grass ... ALL DAY! I told myself, "No, Cindy; you are going to learn something." Dr. Hennen Cummings from Tarleton State University was the professor for the day. This man knows a lot about turf grass. I mean A LOT. Who knew it was so multifaceted? I took many notes, and Dr. Cummings was kind enough to give us very specific products and very precise instruction on what to do to have the lawn of your dreams. I went home, bought all the supplies, and put my plan into action.

Step 1: Apply a pre-emergent if needed. My lawn really needed something because I think I had every type of green Mr. Cummings spoke of that day. On March 30th I majorly cleaned my push mower, raised the mowing height of the blade, and mowed. I then applied the correct amount of Lesco Pre-Emergent 0-0-7 to my lawn and watered it in as directed.



Photo courtesy of Cindy Helm
After



Photo courtesy of Cindy Helm
Before

Step 2: I watered once a week for 30 minutes to give the area a good deep soaking.

Step 3: I continued to mow every 5 days at the higher mowing height.

Step 4: On May 6th I applied 1 lb of Fast Green 26-0-2 for my 1,000 square foot yard and watered it in as directed.

Step 5: I watched the miracle of green turf appear. (I really can't believe what a difference I have seen in this yard!)

The moral of this story is implement your instruction. If you apply the steps, they just might work.

Good luck and happy turfing to you!

Jr Master Gardener Camp

BY BETH SHARUM

July brought the heat and the excitement of another fantastic year of Junior Master Gardener camp. JMG summer camp, a SWAt program, was held during the mornings of July 9th through July 13th at Global Spheres Center in Corinth. This is SWAt's third summer to partner with Denton Parks and Rec for the event.

The JMG camp team's goal is simple – for the kids to have a ton a fun while they learn about plants! This summer, each day of camp featured how plants are beneficial to our world. This included exploring the general benefits as well as digging deeper into benefits of specific plants. Succulents, herbs, flowers, fruits, and vegetables were all featured during the week.

Mornings began with a daily lesson and then jumped right into hands-on activities. Highlights of the week included propagation lessons, food tastings, crafts, and getting hands dirty in the garden. The all-around favorite camper activity was tied between creating succulent terrariums and making refrigerator herb pickles.

This year brought a new partnership and a lot of excitement to the week. UNT's College of Visual Arts and Design worked to bring a bit of the UNT Dye Garden to camp on Flower Day. Campers learned about eco-dying fabrics with flowers and plant parts. They tie-dyed bandanas with a dye made from avocado pits and one made with indigo flowers. Campers also had an opportunity to pound pigments into fabric from fresh and dried flowers. Everyone had a blast (including the volunteers) with these activities.



Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

JMG 2018 Summer Campers

enjoying pounding pigments from flowers into fabric.



Photo courtesy of Lea Watson

Master Gardeners Leah Knack

(right) and Kimberly Bien build terrariums with JMG summer campers.

This camp is not possible without the group of dedicated, talented, and wonderfully fun Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers. We thank you for your hard work and dedication to the project and hope to see you again in 2019!

Do you want a taste of summer camp fun? Register for the Gardening with Kids training to be held during our August 29th AT Day to enjoy your own version of summer camp. Join Marisa Williams and Beth Sharum at 9:00 am for a fun-filled hour or so of gardening activities that are perfect for kids (and kids at heart).



A Gardener's Daughter

BY GUEST CONTRIBUTOR ALEX HELM

Growing up, I loved watching my mom and dad garden and landscape every spring and summer. From veggies to fruit trees to flowers, my parents are always learning and growing something new. I think they are part of the reason why I wanted to try my hand at gardening. There's just one thing, though - I live in an apartment.

As a recent college graduate, I'm living the apartment life, but I've managed to grow quite a few different plants on my balcony these past few years, despite the challenges that come along with container gardening.

My junior year of college I lived in an apartment with a western-facing balcony. The only sun I got was in the evening, and, in the Texas summer, that meant intense sunset heat. Still, I grew basil, two kinds of impatiens, and mint on my balcony. I still have my mint today.

Growing plants on a western-facing balcony came with its challenges, though, especially as an amateur gardener. During the hotter months, I had to water almost every single day. Sometimes I'd look outside and the leaves on my impatiens would be droopy. A drink saved them several times. I attempted to grow some marigolds, but my balcony wasn't conducive for them. They needed morning and afternoon sun, rather than no sun at all until 3 or 4 p.m. My basil thrived for a while during the cooler spring months before struggling in the heat. Both my marigolds and my basil ended up on my mom's patio.

Fast forward a year and I'm now living in an eastern-oriented apartment. Everything I learned about growing plants facing the west went out the window, as I had to learn what worked best for plants facing the east. During August 2017, when I moved in, my impatiens were still flowering a bit through the end of summer. Once they died back in the fall, I removed them to get ready for new plants in the spring. My mint stopped looking as big and green and beautiful as it did in the spring, so I cut it back. During the winter, I had to bring my plants in several times due to frost and cold temperatures, especially since I live on the second floor and there's no earth to provide warmth.

Come spring, I was ready to try something new. My herb of choice this time was oregano, and it is still growing tall and strong. I bought some purple double impatiens and have learned from the past to water them more than I think is necessary and deadhead them more often to keep the blooms coming all summer long. After removing even more of the old, dead parts of my mint, the leaves started growing big and green again. I even have a little pot with Autumn Joy that my mom gave to me as a gift. It started out inside, but I quickly realized it needed more sun than what came through the window. Now it's thriving on my balcony.

People living in small spaces may think it's impossible to garden, but, if a 21-year-old college kid can, you can. There's a bit of a learning curve, and attentiveness is key. I had to watch how my plants reacted to temperature, placement, and availability of sun, but I found it's possible to have beautiful plants in a bitty space.





BY JANIE FARLER

Help! My plants look fried. I'm not at all sure I'm watering enough for this heat. Can you give me some guidance?

No need to get overheated. Sit down, pour a glass of iced tea, and read the following article this afternoon while it is too hot to go outside.

It is a lot of information, but it covers every mode of irrigation for grass, trees, vegetable gardens, flower beds, and anything else you might own. Here's the link:

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/drought/efficient-use-of-water-in-the-garden-and-landscape/>

Also worth noting, some plants are better able to take the heat than others. After our last terrible drought year in 2011, we surveyed our members to find out what thrived, what survived, and what died.

You might want to look at that list for future planting:

<http://txmg.org/denton/files/2012/03/Top-Plants-and-Top-Dead-Plants.pdf>

And remember to mulch, mulch, mulch! Mulching not only helps moderate the soil temperature, thereby protecting and promoting root development, but also helps retain moisture by reducing water evaporation from the soil's surface.



If you have questions about caring for plants or any other horticulture-related subjects, please contact our Master Gardener Help Desk at 940.349.2892 or master.gardener@dentoncounty.com. It's free of charge, and it's our pleasure to assist you.



Denton County Master Gardener Association

Design Your Yard with Earth-Kind® Landscaping

"Homeowner education focused on Earth-Kind® practices conserving time, money, and natural resources to create beautiful, productive yards or gardens."

- 🌱 **Planning Preparation**
- 🌱 **Design Application**
- 🌱 **Hardscape Considerations**
- 🌱 **Plant Selection**

Six Tuesday Evenings
August 28, September 4, 11, 18, 25 and October 2
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Joseph A. Carroll Building
401 W. Hickory Street
Room 115
Denton, TX 76201

For more information and to register, visit www.dcmga.com

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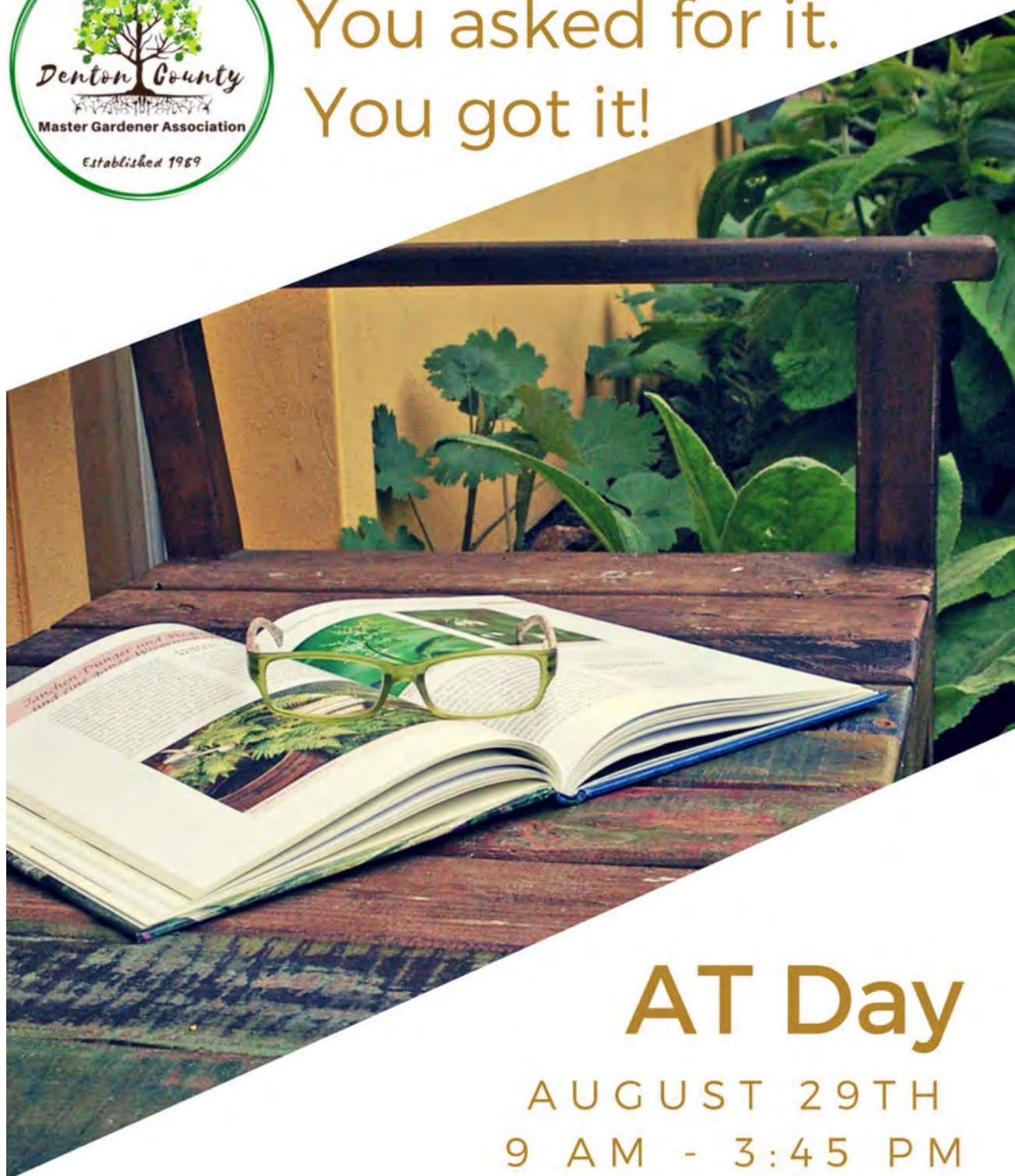
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EXTENSION



Version 4 - 2018



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



DENTON COUNTY
MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Here We Grow Again!

Now Recruiting for Our
30th Anniversary 2019 Intern Class

Applications Accepted
August 15 - October 19, 2018

**Open House Round Up
Informational Meeting**
October 17, 2018 ~ 10 am to 12 pm
Joseph A. Carroll Building
401 W. Hickory Street, Room 115
Denton, TX 76201

Details available at
www.dcmga.com



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TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
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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.

We seek to provide reasonable accommodation for all persons with disabilities for this
program and ask that you notify the Denton County AgriLife Extension Office of the
auxiliary aid or service that will be required.



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.

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Save the Date

August 28– October 2:	Design Your Yard with Earth-Kind Landscaping Course
August 29:	AT Day
September 20:	North Texas Giving Day
October 13:	Fall Garden Festival

Contact Information

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Content

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

Ideas, photos, and articles are welcome and may be submitted to Editor Karen Gibson at karenhoot19@gmail.com or Communications Director Kathryn Wells at kathrynwells333@gmail.com.