

Denton County Master Gardener Association



THE ROOT

Grow With Us



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Buds From The Board

BY PAT MOYER, PRESIDENT

Well, we made it through a very challenging Fall Garden Fest. It seems that each Garden Fest I've participated in since my Intern year of 2013 has had a memorable part of it. This year's Fest was no exception. This one should be known as the "one that the sky opened up on." Setting up in the rain on Friday was only the start. Dealing with the deluge on Saturday gave us more opportunities to see how adaptive our organization can be under difficult conditions.

I think we succeeded in grand form, from dealing with trying to get as many booths under cover to making an "on the fly" classroom in the Fairground Building. The "classroom," while a little uncomfortable, allowed us to keep our speakers on schedule. Additionally, an unscientific poll of our vendors indicated that, despite the weather, they were happy with the Fest. So, I think the Fest was an overall success.

I'd really like to give a shout out to the FGF Team, especially Sharrie Ely, Susan Novak, Carolyn Stoy, Steve Spurgin, Russell

WHAT'S GROWING ON

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Buds from the Board (Cont.)

Tyson, and Barbara Prins who did yeoman duty making this another successful project. I know there are countless other Sharrie would also like to thank, but I'm limited to 350 words for this article. But thanks to all of you, too.

On a drier topic, please make sure you complete your membership renewal for 2019. If you have entered your Service and AT Hours into VMS like you should (12 hours of each for Veterans and 70 hours of each for Interns), then the process can take as little as 5 minutes. If you don't have your Service and AT hours completed and entered into VMS, then the process can be more of an issue. If you have any questions, please see Gay Campbell, our fantastic Member-at-Large, or any other member of the Board of Directors.

Please, please, please, get those Service and AT Hours in and renew your membership for 2019.

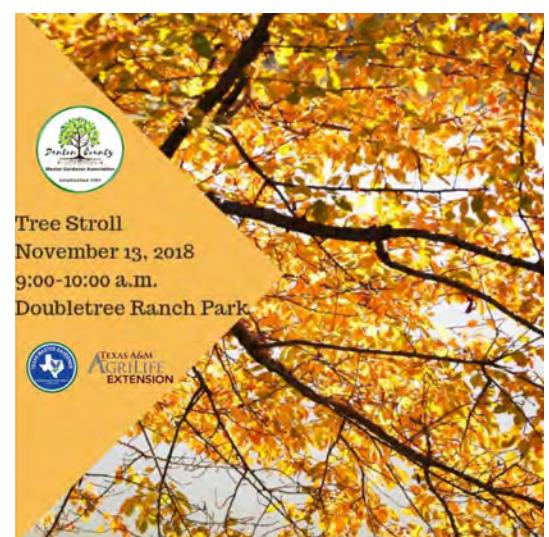
Wishing you Great Fall Gardening

Pat Moyer



DCMGA Intern Beverly

Duncan (left) smiled through the rain at this year's Fall Garden Fest, and her friend drove a very long way to join us for the event!



TOP GARDENING TIPS

November

Prepare tender plants to overwinter inside; check for insects.
 Leave the leaves! Mow in place, compost, or use as mulch.
 Check trees for damaged limbs that may be compromised by ice.
 Plan to relocate established trees & shrubs after dormancy (late November to early January).

#DCMGA #GROWWITHUS

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION



Herbal Branch

BY KATHY RAINNEY

When it comes to versatility, herbs are hard to beat. They provide wonderful fragrance, add delicious flavor to your favorite dishes, look beautiful in your yard, attract pollinators, and can be preserved for use throughout the year. DCMGA's Herbal Branch project has been thriving for about 10 years and continues today with its original purpose —providing education on growing and using herbs. Herbs are easy to grow and care for and are irreplaceable in the kitchen. Once you begin using fresh herbs in cooking, there's no turning back. It is delightful to step outside your door and snip just the herb you want for the food or drink you are preparing.

Fall is the perfect time to plant perennial herbs (oregano, rosemary, some sages) and now is also a great time to start parsley seeds (soak them 24 hours first). Unless it is a brutal winter, little parsley plants will grow over the winter and quickly grow to a nice size in the spring. Dill can be planted now from seed (or from plants if you can find them) and produce until the first hard freeze. The basil you don't cut and use now will be going to seed. Let it, and you will have a host of little basil plants next spring.

The Herbal Branch welcomes all Master Gardeners and members of the community to its monthly meetings. Meetings are typically the 4th Monday of the month at 10 am at the Joseph E. Carroll Building in Denton, room 115. Members volunteer to present programs on herbs they know and grow or on herbs they would like to know better and are willing to study. Herbal Branch is a good place for Master Gardeners to practice presentations in front of a friendly crowd. The meetings also offer food made with the herb being discussed. Speakers find it rewarding to learn more about a subject they love and to pass on that knowledge to their fellow Master Gardeners, friends, and neighbors. Some examples of popular topics have included making herbal teas and pesto, growing exotic garlic, and designing the ideal herb garden.



Canva Stock Photo

Rosemary

Rosemary officinalis is an attractive, perennial evergreen shrub that blooms in the winter. It likes full sun and good drainage. Harvest any time.

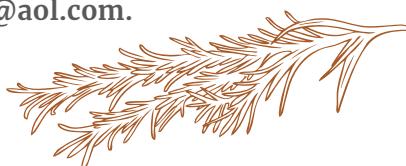


Canva Stock Photo

Sweet Basil

Ocimum basilica, is part of the Lamiaceae or Mint Family. It's a tender annual herb requiring full sun. Harvest fresh young leaves as needed. Leaves may be dried or frozen for winter use.

If you have questions or inquiries for the Herbal Branch, contact project managers Suzie Cooke sc_cook31@hotmail.com or Carolyn Richard cxrich801@aol.com.



Meet Ray Roberts

BY GAY CAMPBELL

No ... he is not THAT Ray Roberts. But he IS every bit as accomplished. Few individuals could claim such a full, adventurous, and exciting life. Meet retired Major Raymond D. Roberts, Sr.

Ray was born in Birdville, Texas, in 1931. During the 1940s, Ray's favorite teacher at Arlington High was a navy reservist who flew airplanes on the weekends. Intrigued, Ray asked to accompany him, but was told that it was impossible without a uniform. To most 14-year-old boys, that would end the conversation. However, Ray was not to be discouraged. After rallying a few friends, Ray and his buddies stopped by the Navy recruitment office on the way home from school. Unable to provide proof of age, the boys were turned away. Undeterred, they visited the local Marine Corps office where Ray and his friends told the officers they were 18. Taken at their word with no parental consent or ID needed, Ray and his buddies were officially welcomed into the US Army at age 14.

The very next day, Ray found himself on a train bound for San Antonio. On the way to basic training, he wrote his father a letter telling him that he had joined the army and that his '37 Ford (which he owned at age 14 with no driver's license) was parked at the train station with the key still inside.

Ray transferred to the Army Air Corp (predecessor to the Air Force) when he realized that he would soon be shipped to Korea. Several weeks after joining the army, Ray was forced to go before a board and advised to admit that he was underage. After confessing that he had lied, the army officially sought and obtained parental consent. They proceeded to change his date of birth on all military records and eventually he was sent to Aviation Engineering School.



Photo courtesy of Ray Roberts

Major Ray Roberts (retired)

with Secretary of the Air Force
Heather Wilson at the 70th Anniversary
Commemoration of the Berlin Airlift.

Meanwhile, in typical Ray fashion, he bought a fast motorcycle, wrecked it, had no license, and spent a night in jail. Ray chuckles as he relates the incident. Just before turning 16, he told his Sgt. that he was tired of working so hard, that he was underage, and wanted to go home. His Sgt. promptly replied, "Forget it. You're in the Army now." Ray was then sent to Fassberg, Germany, where he would take part in the largest non-combat military operation of the 20th century. According to Ray, the Berlin Airlift was also the "greatest humanitarian aviation rescue event ever accomplished."

At the end of WWII, the United States and her allies, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union, divided Germany into four equal parts and were committed to redeveloping the war-torn country. However, in 1948, Stalin decided not to share. The Soviets developed a plan to blockade and starve the city of Berlin, making it easier to push out the other three allies and take over the suffering and impoverished city.

<https://dcmga.com>

Ray Roberts (Cont.)

By doing so, they planned to expand Soviet reach throughout Germany and advance the spread of communism. Unfortunately for the Soviets, they miscalculated the ingenuity, compassion, and perseverance of the United States. For 15 months, Allied Forces flew around the clock, air-lifting food, coal, and other supplies to the 2.4 million starving residents of West Berlin. American and British planes took off and landed every 45 seconds. The pilots, including Ray, made three and sometimes four extremely dangerous flights a day. Each flew 12-hour shifts without current updated approach instruments to aid them. They flew day and night through rain, snow, fog, and mist. They endured blinding search lights, radio jamming, and Soviet aircraft harassment. On one mission, Ray was flying close to the edge of his zone when a Russian Yak fighter flew up beside him and locked eyes, waiting for Ray to accidentally veer out of his safe zone. Thankfully, that did not happen and, after riding along Ray's wing for at least 3 minutes, the Russian fighter lost interest. Overall, 32 crew members were recorded lost during the airlift. Remarkably, Ray was just barely 17 at the time.

Finally, the Soviets realized that attempts to isolate West Berlin were useless and lifted the blockade. Had it not been for the courage and determination of the people of West Berlin, the 6,000 Allied Airmen, and countless others who acted as support staff, "the map of Europe would look entirely different today," reflects Eddie Ide, a Berlin Airlift veteran. Ray firmly believes that the Berlin Airlift "stopped the spread of communism in Europe."

Last month was the 70th anniversary celebration of the Berlin Airlift. As President of the Berlin Airlift Veterans Association (BAVA), Ray and his family were honored guests at the commemoration ceremony in Arlington, Virginia. Ray was asked to make a speech at the wreath-laying ceremony which was also attended by Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson and the German Ambassador, Dr. Emily Habar.



Photo courtesy of Ray Roberts
70th Anniversary Celebration of the Berlin Airlift

(L. to R.) Former Senator Bill Frist, M.D. (son-in-law), Linda Roberts (wife), Tracy Roberts Frist (daughter), Captain Brandon Roberts (son), BAVA President retired Major Ray Roberts, famous "Candy Bomber" Reggie Powell, BAVA VP Ralph Dionne, and Lea (Brandon Robert's fiancée).

Ray Roberts (Cont.)

For most individuals, an event such as the Berlin Airlift would be enough excitement to last a lifetime. But not Ray. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Ray was serving in Kansas when the nuclear alarm went off. Four planes carrying nuclear warheads were cleared for takeoff. En route to Cuba, Ray and the other pilots were given special nuclear codes. Bombing seemed imminent until they were suddenly instructed to turn west and land in Great Falls, Montana. They were on standby in Montana for 2 1/2 weeks. Finally, they were instructed to return to Kansas where the nuclear warheads were unloaded and replaced with standard weapons. They flew back and forth between Miami and Cuba for 3 months.

Ray served at several bases both in the United States and Germany. While living in Kansas City, one of Ray's favorite pastimes was to buzz the local neighborhoods at Mach 1.5. That's 1 1/2 times the speed of sound! Ray enjoyed buzzing his cousin's home just above the tree line. When he was directly over his cousin's house, he would typically hit the afterburner creating a noise that could only be described as a huge explosion. In fact, the very first time Ray performed this maneuver, his cousin was convinced his hot water heater had exploded! To Ray, a sense of humor was crucial to help survive the bad times. He recalls another event that occurred while serving in Kansas City. The airplane Ray piloted was always flown in pairs. The second plane was tasked with flying in formation just feet away from Ray's plane. The wingman's job was to watch Ray and mimic every maneuver that Ray and his plane made. Ray and his wingman were flying side by side one second and the very next second, the wingman was gone and Ray was completely alone. The Air Force was not immediately forthcoming with information, but eventually Ray learned that his friend crashed due to a freak accident caused by a defect in the plane's cabin design. Basically, a flashlight fell from its proper place in the cabin and wedged itself behind the stick, making the stick immobile and humanly impossible to move. Ray suffered his own crash landing while flying an F-102A, S/N 56-1060 in Germany, but thankfully he walked away.

By request, Ray's final military assignment was as a fighter pilot in Vietnam in 1968. His year in Vietnam included the deadly Tet Offensive where Ray and two other American pilots hid behind enemy lines for 3 days before being rescued. During that time, a Viet Cong sniper fired at Ray five times. The bullets were so close that Ray remembers hearing all five whiz by his head.

While in Vietnam, Ray kept a daily diary and snapped about 100 photographs. In 1969, with 22 years of experience in the armed forces, he retired from the US Air Force as a highly decorated and commended Major. At 37 years old, he was the youngest field grade officer for the length of service and no disability. During his distinguished military career, Ray received more medals and awards than I have space to mention.

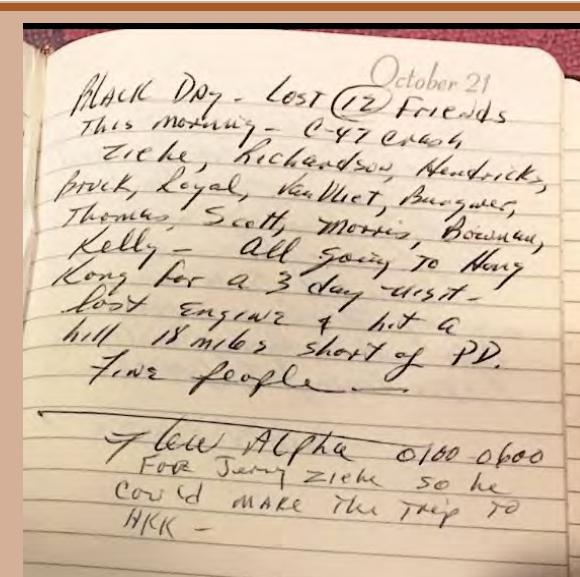


Photo courtesy of Ray Roberts

A page from Ray's Vietnam diary

On Oct. 21, 1968, Ray wrote: "BLACK DAY - Lost 12 friends this morning. C-47 crash." (Ray lists each friend by name). "All going to Hong Kong for a 3 day visit. Lost engine and hit a hill 18 miles from PD. Fine people."

Ray Roberts (Cont.)

After leaving the military, Ray became an entrepreneur. He purchased two car dealerships (VW and Subaru), two grocery stores, and a farm in Virginia. Asked what make and model of car is his all-time favorite, Ray replied, "A Jaguar XKE Roadster." In fact, he liked them so much that he owned 35 of them! He bought them in the US and shipped them to England. When asked why he shipped them in what would normally be the opposite direction, he said that Jaguars from the US sold well there because the Jaguars in Great Britain were all rusted! Sounds logical, but it's regretful that he has no leftover XKE Roadsters to sell to friends on this side of the pond!

Eventually, the dealerships and grocery stores were sold and Ray moved back to Texas where he became an aviation administrator and pilot for a large real estate company. He handled all corporate aviation, including the buying and selling of company aircraft. During his time as an aviation administrator, Ray purchased a 737, a Falcon, a DC 9, and six Learjets. Asked which aircraft is his all-time favorite, Ray responded that he loves Learns. "They fly a lot like a fighter." Luxury and speed – I sense a pattern here.

Speaking of all-time favorite things, I have to admit that hanging out with Ray is at the top of my list. I first met Ray two years ago and since that initial meeting, it has been a true honor and a great pleasure to call Ray my friend. Knowing how much I love listening to his adventures, Ray accommodates me with stories whenever possible. One such story involves the last major purchase he made as an aviation administrator. Seventeen years ago, he met with the brother of the King of Saudi Arabia to purchase a 737 for his corporation. Price tag? A mere \$18 million. When he mentioned how difficult it would be to keep every metal surface in the airplane polished as they were all made of brass, including the seat belts, the insulted Prince exploded, and the deal almost fell through. In Ray's defense, brass and 14K gold do look a lot alike. Only some very fast sweet-talking on Ray's part saved the Prince's pride and the deal. Several years later, the plane underwent an interior remodel at a cost of almost half a million dollars. Ray has many fond memories of flying the gilded 737 all over the world. During that era, Ray also befriended the California band Pablo Cruz and piloted them to concerts around the country in one of his corporate Learjets. While flying in and out of Ghana on company business, Ray willingly agreed to deliver wheelchairs, medical supplies, kid's soccer jerseys, and assorted humanitarian supplies from the US to the impoverished nation. His wife, Linda, found a US company to donate 75 basketballs to underprivileged kids in Ghana. Ray agreed to fly them, but when the company delivered the basketballs, they had all been inflated. Ray laughs as he recalls having to deflate all 75 basketballs before loading them onto the plane.

Ray officially retired three years ago after 22 years in the military and another 44 years in corporate aviation. Meticulous record keeping indicates that Ray has landed an airplane in 74 countries.

Ray lives on a small farm just outside of Denton with Linda and their daughter, Christine. They are very involved in a local church. Linda is a leader/coordinator for Bible Study Fellowship, which Ray also attends each week. Ray has six talented children, each accomplished for different reasons. Their son Brandon was a student at the Texas Academy of Math and Science. He went on to graduate from the Air Force Academy and recently returned from active duty in Quatar. He is a Captain and an Army Intelligence Specialist who lives in San Antonio at the moment.

Ray Roberts (Cont.)

Ray awakens every day between 4 and 4:30 a.m., and by 6 a.m. he is at the gym for an hour workout. He is currently on the Board of Directors of four public companies and an active member of the Denton County Master Gardener Association. When not volunteering, Ray grows vegetables on his farm. This year he grew cantaloupes on a small plot of land and a wide range of vegetables in a larger garden that measures 25 x 35 yards. Ray is such a prolific

gardener that he routinely has an abundance of vegetables to share. In addition to his two gardens, the family farm boasts two donkeys, although the noun Ray uses is often less polite.

Yes ... it is true that he is not THAT Ray Roberts. But this witty, charismatic, humble, and heroic friend is something much better. He is OUR Ray Roberts.



New Membership Renewal Process

It's time to renew your annual DCMGA membership, and, as you do, please note the following changes to the policy and procedure:

- Annual dues paid by January 31, 2019 are \$15.
- Annual dues paid after January 31, 2019 will be \$25
- All service hours and AT hours must be entered in VMS no later than January 31, 2019.
- Any member not in good standing as of March 31, 2019 will be inactivated, unless granted an exception by the CEA-Hort.

As always, to remain a member in good standing, the following conditions must be met:

- Required annual service hours and AT hours have been earned and entered into VMS.
- The annual renewal form AND annual volunteer service agreement have been completed.
- Annual dues have been paid.

Master Gardener Association

For a review of the annual membership renewal requirements, please visit the Member's Info section of our website or this direct link:

<https://dcmga.com/members-info/annual-dcmga-membership-renewal/>

Please contact President Pat Moyer or Member-at-Large Gay Campbell with any questions or concerns.



Plant of the Month

Sweet Woodruff

BY LEE ANN YATES

Looking for a plant that ticks several boxes? Perennial, groundcover, shady spot, pretty, fragrant, culinary herb? Sweet woodruff may just fit the bill for you. Native to most of Europe and North Africa, it is adapted to large parts of the United States, including North Texas.

Growing Sweet Woodruff

Sweet woodruff is a pretty, perennial, fragrant, herbal groundcover perfect for light-to full-shade spots. Summer's full sun will scorch the leaves and can force the plant into dormancy or even die-back, but it will rebound well in the cooler temperatures of autumn. Palmate compound leaves whorl around the stems and it blooms from late spring through fall. Its tiny clusters of tubular, star-shaped flowers are held above the foliage on slender stems. Planted in well-draining soil enriched with plenty of organic matter, sweet woodruff shines, tolerating a wide range of pH from 4.3 to 8.3, but prefers a rich, moist soil. It does well in hardiness zones 5 to 8.

Low and spreading, it grows 6 - 12 inches tall and up to 2 feet wide. It spreads by stolons and, under optimum conditions, is aggressive, but is not classified as invasive. *Texas Gardener* magazine suggests bordering sweet woodruff with large stones to make it easy to see the runners as they grow over the stones and prune them as needed. This herb also self-seeds, forming a low mat. However, the mat is not so thick that other plants cannot come up through the foliage. It makes an excellent carpet for bulbs. It is deer resistant, but no evidence was found concerning rabbit resistance.

Propagating Sweet Woodruff

Sweet woodruff can be propagated by seed, cuttings, division, or separation. If you are a



Photo by David J. Stang [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

Sweet Woodruff

a.k.a. Sweet-Scented Bedstraw was used in medieval times as a fragrant strewing herb.

proponent of saving seeds, the current year's seeds become fully ripe in July or August. Be sure to stratify seeds to increase their germination rates. Sow the seeds in spring. Additionally, you can make softwood cuttings in spring or divide clumps in spring or fall. Be sure to keep the division roots moist. Keeping the soil moist in the warmer summer temperatures will prolong sweet woodruff's growth and delay dormancy. This herb has no serious disease problems other than occasional bouts of leaf spot, rust, or mildew. Pests generally leave sweet woodruff alone.

Sweet Woodruff Uses

During medieval times, sweet woodruff was used as an external wrap for wounds and cuts because it contains coumarin, which prevents the clotting of blood, but also imparts the

Sweet Woodruff (Cont.)

plant's sweet scent. Also known as sweet-scented bedstraw, this herb was used as a fragrant strewing herb or as a mattress filling. Some still use it as a moth and insect deterrent for linens and clothing. Tan or grey-green dyes can be made from the stems and leaves, while a red dye results when the roots are processed. The fragrant flowers are still used to flavor early German Riesling wine called Maiwein (May wine) for special springtime celebrations. Fresh sweet woodruff has a light scent, but when the leaves and flowers are dried, the fragrance becomes stronger, retaining its grassy new-mown hay aroma for years. It makes a wonderfully fragrant potpourri ingredient!

Sweet Woodruff - a multi-purpose plant combining beauty, fragrance, practicality, and wine! Can it get any better? Enjoy!

Resources

Sweet Woodruff Growing Guide, Cornell University

<http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/scenea6bc.html>

University of Wisconsin-Extension Master Gardener Program

<https://wimastergardener.org/article/sweet-woodruff-galium-odorata/>

Herbs for Texas Landscapes

<https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/browse/featured-solutions/gardening-landscaping/herbs-texas-landscapes/>



Sage Stuffing

BY BARBARA BROWN

This sage dressing, prepared outside the bird, is one of my favorites for Thanksgiving.

Ingredients:

- 2 loaves artisan bread cut into cubes and dried
- 1 large minced white onion
- 1 bunch minced celery
- 2 sticks butter
- 5 Tbsp. fresh, minced sage
- 2 cups chicken stock
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Sauté onion and celery in butter until soft.
2. In a large bowl, combine all ingredients.
3. Toss until well mixed.
4. Place in a casserole dish and bake for 30 minutes covered. Then remove the cover and bake an additional 10 minutes.

Growing & Using Cool-Season Herbs

BY BARBARA BROWN

Cool Season Herbs

Herbs grow well in North Texas even for inexperienced gardeners. Using the herbs you have grown to enhance the taste of food without adding calories offers positive benefits for the entire family. Herbs that grow in cool weather include:

- Cilantro
- Parsley
- Dill
- Fennel
- Lemon balm

Get Started Growing

The cool growing season begins in October and continues until April, and sometimes May, in North Texas. Herbs such as dill and cilantro can be sown from seed. However, to improve your chances of successful gardening, other cool-season herbs are better started from transplants.

Select a site that provides at least six hours of full sun. Although herbs require little soil amendment after they begin growing, they do want soil that drains well. Break up the soil in your herb bed and mix in organic material to provide nutrition for the plants and improve drainage. Many North Texas gardeners find that raised beds with improved soil works best. Make sure that your site has access to water during dry spells.

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Canva Stock Photo

Cilantro

(*Coriandrum sativum*) grows well in containers. For a continuous harvest, plant seeds every two weeks.



Canva Stock Photo

Parsley

(*Petroselinum crispum*) is a biennial herb that grows almost year-round in North Texas. Culinary varieties are flat (Italian) leaf and curly (French) leaf.

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Planting and Harvesting

When planting herbs from seed, follow the instructions on the seed packet for the correct planting depth. Mix a small amount of balanced fertilizer with the soil and add seeds. Pat the soil around the seeds to ensure good contact with the soil and water.

For transplanting herbs, dig a hole as deep as the plant in its container. Mix a small amount of balanced fertilizer into the soil and then gently put in the hole. Pat the soil around the base of the herb plant. If the soil is dry, add water.

In cool weather the soil does not dry-out quickly; however, if the soil dries out from lack of rain, add water to the equivalent of one inch per week. Pests are rarely a problem with cool-season herbs.

Growing & Using Cool-Season Herbs (Cont.)

Begin harvesting an herb when the plant has enough foliage to maintain growth. Up to 75% of the current season's growth can be harvested at one time (NCSU Extension Service).

As the weather turns from warm to hot, your herb plant will bolt and begin preparing seeds. You may choose to harvest the seeds from the cilantro and dill plants to use in cooking. The seeds of the cilantro plant are called coriander.

Although most cool-season herbs are frost tolerant, you need to provide protective cover when the temperatures dip below 28° F.

Growing Herbs in a Container

Herbs can also be grown in containers and many cooks like to keep an herb collection growing near the door for easy access when preparing a meal. To grow herbs in a container:

- Select a container with a drain hole to keep roots from setting in water and has the depth and width sufficient for plant roots to spread.
- Choose a good potting mix or supplement soil with 50% composted organic matter.
- Group plants by their need for sun and water.
- Check soil moisture and add water if dry. Container soil dries out more quickly than garden soil.
- Fertilize early if the potting mix does not have added fertilizer and then monthly during the growing season.

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Using Cool-Weather Herbs

Fresh herbs are preferred by chefs for warm and cool dishes. If you are not sure how much of an herb to use, begin with a small amount and add more to your taste preferences.

Harvest herbs mid-morning and wash thoroughly. Wrap in damp paper towels and store in refrigerator until ready to use.

To prepare herbs, remove leaves from stems. Wash thoroughly and pat dry. For herbs on woody stems, grab the top of the stem with one hand and with the other hand move down the stem opposite the direction of growth to remove leaves. Soft-stemmed herbs can be removed individually from the stem or by pulling in the direction of growth.

Cool-season herbs are delicate and will lose flavor quickly when cooked. Therefore, it is best to add them at the end of cooking. Cool-season herbs may also be eaten fresh. Chop or mince the herbs before using to release their flavor.



Canva Stock Photo

Chives

(*Allium schoenoprasum*) onion and (*Allium tuberosum*) garlic are easy to grow perennials. Since they spread their seeds easily, many gardeners prefer to grow them in containers.

Growing & Using Cool-Season Herbs (Cont.)

Here are a few common uses for cool season herbs:

- Cilantro – topping for tacos and taco salad or added to guacamole. Cilantro is a popular ingredient in Chinese and Thai cooking.
- Parsley may be added to flavor soups and cooked vegetables or served fresh. A mixture of chopped parsley and garlic adds flavor to grilled steak, fish, or chicken. A combination of herbs including parsley add taste and texture to homemade salad dressings.
- Dill is often used to season cooked vegetables, in salad dressing, and mixed with yogurt and lemon for flavorful sauce for fish or chicken.
- Fennel can be used in place of or in addition to dill. However, not everyone likes the licorice or anise-like flavor of fennel.
- Lemon balm is often steeped in hot water with tea leaves or added to the preparation of iced tea. To use the leaves, bruise them with a spoon while stirring to release their flavor. A bit of chopped lemon balm complements many fruits, including honeydew, cantaloupe, pineapple, apples, and pears.



Canva Stock Photo

Lemon Balm

(*Melissa officinalis*) is another perennial herb which grows well in the cool season. Lemon balm is a bushy herb and, as a member of the Mint Family, can be considered invasive, so you may wish to grow it in a container. Dry lemon balm leaves and use in a potpourri.

Preserving Herbs

Although fresh herbs are preferred, herbs can be preserved for later use by mixing with oil or butter, freezing in water, or drying.

To preserve herbs in water, chop herbs and place in an ice-cube tray. Fill tray with water and freeze. Then remove cubes and place in labeled bags or containers and keep in freezer until needed.

To save in oil, place herbs in a food processor with 1/3 cup of oil for every 2 cups of leaves – or 1/2 cup unsalted butter per 2 to 4 tablespoons of leaves. For butters, add small amounts of citrus rind, ginger, or garlic for extra flavor. Herb butters and oils can be stored safely in the refrigerator for 4 days, according to the Colorado Extension Service*.

Herbs may be dried in a dehydrator, a low-temperature oven (about 95 degrees F), or microwave. Do not sun-dry herbs in North Texas because of the high humidity. Separate leaves before drying.

Herbs dry out quickly when heated, so monitor closely and remove from heat when the herb leaf crumbles when touched.

This article was first published as part of the *Seasonings from the Sun* series on herbs. More *Seasonings from the Sun* publications can be downloaded from the DCMGA website at <https://dcmga.com/north-texas-gardening/herbs-in-north-texas/>.

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:

1. 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



Photo courtesy of Liz Moyer
Knife Marker



Photo courtesy of Liz Moyer
Flag Marker

Oh, the horror!

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 ...

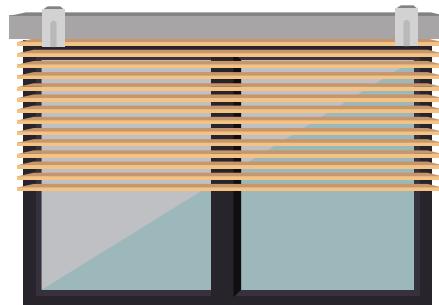
Another advantage: utility flags and plastic knives come in a variety of colors and can really add a pop to your winter landscape!



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 Michele Rawleigh at flower.freak@verizon.net.



DCMGA
HELP DESK
Question of the Month



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

BY JANIE FARLER

Q. We have been growing a lime tree in a pot for six years, moving it to the garage in winter. We were thinking about transplanting it outside. Will it survive the winter here?

A. Not to start on a sour note, but limes are extremely cold sensitive, more so than most other citrus trees. It might survive, depending on how much energy you have to tend it during the winter. Temperatures in the high twenties can kill or severely damage a lime tree. Last January Denton's temperature dropped to 11 degrees three nights in a row, so you would have had to perform extreme measures to protect it.

The air temperature, the length of time it remains below freezing, and the leaf temperature (which may be colder than

the ambient temperature depending on atmospheric conditions) are all factors in whether your tree will survive any freeze.

If you decide to plant it outdoors, put it on the south or southeast side of the house to take advantage of the protection from the house itself, and plant it in full sun. Consider building a frame out of PVC pipe that you can cover with blankets or frost cloth and install heat lamps underneath.

The safest idea, however, might be to put your pot on wheels and move it in and out of the garage just as you have done in the past.

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/2011/mar/citrus_freeze.html



Canva Stock Photo



Denton County's average first freeze date is 11/15, which means there's a 50% probability that frost will occur by that date. Our probable (90% chance) first freeze date is 12/04.

If you have questions about overwintering tender 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.



2018 FALL CHILDREN'S GARDEN

AT FAIROAKS

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

WHERE

Fairoaks
1950 Lattimore St., Denton

WHEN

Thursday mornings from 10:00-11:00
starting August 23rd through November 8th

WHO

Dana Bays
Jacqueline Carney

DATE

ACTIVITY/TOPIC

DEMO

Thursday, August 23	Plant green beans, squash, & pumpkins	How to plant seeds
Thursday, August 30	Plant chard, kohlrabi, lettuce, & turnips	DURING OUR GARDENING CLASSES, WE'LL BE LOOKING FOR BUGS. WHAT'S EATING YOUR FOOD?
Thursday, Sept. 6	Plant carrots, lettuce, & transplants - tomatoes	
Thursday, Sept. 13	Plant snap peas, kale, & transplants - broccoli	
Thursday, Sept. 20	Plant spinach, radishes, beets, & transplants - cabbage	
Thursday, Sept. 27	Plant mustard or collard & transplants - cauliflower	How to compost
Thursday, Oct. 4	Plant radishes, spinach, & transplants - brussel sprouts	
Thursday, Oct. 11	Plant lettuce, turnips, & fava beans	
Thursday, Oct. 18	Weed, water, & harvest	
Thursday, Oct. 25	Field trip to Shiloh Gardens @ Nottingham Dr., Denton	WEATHER PERMITTING Field Trip →
Thursday, Nov. 1	Harvest	
Thursday, Nov. 8	End of Season harvest	Parts of a plant: leaves, roots, & flowers



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

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



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Denton County
Master Gardener Association



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Thanks



Southwest Displays & Events



Justin Seed Co.

2018

our
Fall Garden Fest
Sponsors



DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

GREATER GARDENING

2019 GREATER AUBREY AREA GARDENING SERIES



JANUARY 17

Butterfly Gardens

Carol Rowley

& Mary Branstetter



FEBRUARY 21

Plant Propagation

Suzie Cook



MARCH 21

Basic Landscaping Design

Principles

Shirlee & Claud Singer

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Third Thursday: Jan, Feb, & March

AUBREY AREA LIBRARY

226 Countryside Drive

Aubrey, TX 76227

Jump start your 2019 gardening with this free educational series.

Register via email to
kab@KeepAubreyBeautiful.org
or via phone at 940-343-1313.

SPONSORED BY



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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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Social Media

Facebook:

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

Instagram:

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

Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/@DentonCountyMGA>

Pinterest:

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

Save the Date

- November 13: Doubletree Ranch Park Tree Stroll
- November 14: DCMGA General Meeting & Elections
- December 12: DCMGA Christmas Party
- January 16: Graduation & Awards Banquet

Contact Information

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<https://dcmga.com>

Content

Submission deadline for the December edition of *The Root* is Thursday, November 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.