

Tarrant County Master Gardeners



TEXAS A & M AGRILIFE EXTENSION AGENCY

Volume 1, Issue 7

July 2017

From Dirt to Table...Durham Intermediate School

It all started when Tarrant County Master Gardener Henry Cole decided to propose cleaning up a run down garden at an intermediate school as part of his Master Gardener Intern Project five years ago. He decided to teach 350 5th and 6th graders a skill that they could use for the rest of their lives. They planted, cultivated and harvested over 1,200 potatoes in the garden behind their intermediate school during the 2016 school year. Thanks to a Texas A&M researcher, a variety of potatoes were donated for the students to plant, grow and harvest and cook.

"We figured out how much space we had, and I was sent 9 types of potatoes, 4 of which were commercially available, 5 of which were experimental," Henry said.

"We divided up our raised beds into 9 different plots and we brought the potatoes in," Henry said, "I had several master gardeners and par-

ents come over to my house and cut the seed potatoes, sulfur them, let them age for a few days. Then we scheduled the students to come out into their school garden to plant the seed potatoes the following week."

While teaching the students in the group how to use organization and problem solving skills, they carefully tended and cared for the growing potato plants for weeks until they were ready to harvest.

Then Henry, along with the help of others in the community, showed the students ways to prepare the potatoes. Having people from different parts of the community come out to support and help him and the students played a crucial role in the success of the project.

"I like to take my experience into the classroom and teach them not only gardening, but also how to prepare some of the potatoes for the table," Henry said. "A chef

friend of mine gave us 6 different recipes that came right from his restaurant. He is an executive chef at a very popular 4-star restaurant."

After planting, cultivating and harvesting the potatoes, learning different ways to prepare and prep them, Henry and the students reflected about their involvement during the harvesting process. They weighed and counted the harvested the potatoes and the math classes created charts based on the data collected. All of the students got to take their potatoes home to share with their

families.

"It turned out to be a really good experience all the way around," Henry said. "The students were saying, I want to plant! Now we are getting the students thinking in terms of going out, working, and planting in the garden."

Henry found out that planting the potatoes affected the student's lives so much deeper than just the holes they dug in the garden. It had an impact on their home lives as well as their level of interaction at school. He calls this project "From

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From Dirt to Table continued

Dirt To Table”.

The project became so large that it was even entered into a Texas Master Gardener state competition.

“This project was submitted as a research project in the extra-large Master Gardener category for a state competition,” Henry said. “We won first place in the state for this potato project for 2016 in

the research division.”

Overall, Henry was able to enrich and encourage growth in the student’s lives, both in and out of the classroom.

“They’re not just getting this in their home life,” Henry said. “They’re getting it through school and the kids love of going out into the garden and interfacing with it, even if they’re just pulling weeds,

counting butterflies, or caterpillars, they really like it. And they’re sharing this with their parents. It was a win-win for everybody”



Help Desk

“Have I got a deal for you”, I believe were Taddie’s words when she presented the new “Ask a Master Gardener” project in collaboration with Ft Worth

Ask a Master Gardener! By Eleanor Tuck

Botanic Gardens. The “deal” is that you would be working at the Gardens on Wednesday and Saturday from 10: to 2: PM—or just a two hour shift if you prefer. This new plan offers us an opportunity to be able

to talk with visitors in person. We will have some brochures/ publications on hand but can also offer to send them by email in a couple of days. Primarily, we want to focus on being available in person to

help them but also to educate the public to know how much is available to them through A&M AgriLife Extension.

This plan offers you an opportunity to present info and publications in

Ask a Master Gardener continued

person rather than just on the phone. Needless to say, parking will be a bit easier and a mite less traffic. We will have the "Ask A Master Gardener" desk located in the foyer of the Deborah Beggs Moncrief Garden Center.

At our June meeting where this plan was first

presented, your response was overwhelmingly positive. We do have an opening in July and one in August and an "emergency" list is being developed—in case you could cover on a last minute notice.

If you prefer to work the office on Wednesday, you may certainly

continue to do so—we hope to have a phone available at the MG/BG desk so that we could help each other if needed. We will continue to ask for the person's zip code and make notes which publications are given or what may need to be sent from the office. Much of the

Office Manual is being adapted as a Handbook to have at our Ask a Master Gardener tables. Forms for accruing this information are being developed—nothing is written in stone—YET!

As always, your input will be valuable as we experiment in expanding the availability of our ever so wonderful Master Gardeners.

Compost Team Hits the Big Screen

On Friday, May 26, 2017, TxDot filmed the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Compost Outpost weekly Friday AM Volunteers hard at work. The shots filmed are for the video being used at the Keep Texas Beautiful State Conference. Keep Fort Worth Beautiful won top honors as a recipient of the 2017 Governor's Community Achievement Award. Fort Worth won for environmental

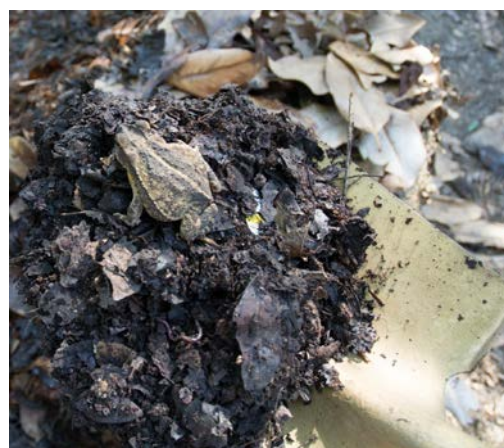
achievements in a community of 180,000+ population. Part of the application acknowledged the composting program and the Compost Outpost Grand Opening. Cheryl Libby from the City of Fort Worth accompanied the film crew at the Outpost.

Bill Hall is the Botanic Garden Compost Outpost leader and MG team members Mercy

Kettler, Janice Sims, Ginny Schmidt, and Susan Houston have worked on a weekly basis at the Outpost since its opening October, 2015. Master Gardeners Marsha Herb and Steve Purdy have recently joined our group of happy composters. We also have dedicated team members Kathy Crow, Laurie Scheiern, Maureen Hogan, Monty Knapp, David Coke, Daryl and

Deeana Keen, and Liz and John McDonald.

Since February, 2017, we have expanded our operation at the Botanic Garden Compost Outpost from five piles to building and managing 18 C.E. Shepherd's Bin piles. Finished compost is furnished for the Fort Worth Botanic Garden's Backyard Vegetable Garden.



Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities by Patsy Miller

Still opportunities to get your certification hours – or if you just enjoy talking about plants – sign up for these community events.

There is another Fort Worth Home and Garden Show, August 18-20. Here you meet the experienced gardener and new transplants to our state. Both groups always have interesting questions!

The home and garden show will again be at Will Rogers where parking is \$10 each day. The education committee has decided to pick up the tab for parking for TWO cars each shift. Volunteers can get together and agree to meet at Botanic Garden and carpool together to Will Rogers. Or designate your own carpool meeting place. Turn in a reimbursement form to the treasurer. If you have a Fort Worth handicap sticker, you can park for free.

Contact Patsy Miller if you want to volunteer.

Using handouts, you will be providing information on gen-

eral horticulture, especially drought tolerant plants and water conservation tips.

All volunteers will be sent a reminder email the week of the event.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

July 15, 8 a.m.– noon — Cowtown Farmers Market, Weatherford Traffic Circle, 3821 Southwest Blvd, Fort Worth

August 18-20 — Home and Garden Show, Will Rogers*

Friday, August 18 — 2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.; 4:30 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday, August 19 — 10 a.m. — 2:30 p.m. ; 2:30 p.m. — 7 p.m.

Sunday, August 20 — 11 a.m. — 2 p.m. ; 2 — 5 p.m.

* Parking will be paid for two cars each shift. Carpooling is encouraged. Turn in reimbursement form to treasurer.

August 26 — Yard Smart, Fort Worth Botanic Garden, details to come

September 16, 8 a.m.-noon — Cowtown Farmers Market, Weatherford Traffic Circle, 3821 Southwest Blvd., Fort Worth

September 23, 8 a.m.-noon — Keller Farmers Market, 1100 Bear Creek Parkway, Keller

October 8, 10 a.m. — 4 p.m. — Nature Conservancy Open Days, Master Gardener Desk at one of the tour homes. Shifts to be announced.

October 14, 8 a.m.– noon — Keller Farmers Market, 1100 Bear Creek Parkway, Keller

October 21, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. — Arlington EcoFest, downtown Arlington

Important July Dates

Tarrant County Master Gardeners office will be closed on Tuesday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day

Tarrant County Monthly Meeting will be Thursday, July 6

Tarrant County Advisory Board Meeting and Executive Board meeting will be Thursday, July 20 at 9:30

Japanese Garden Docents Needed by Diane Jones

Do you have a passion for the FWBG Japanese Garden? Would you like to share that passion?

We are looking for individuals who are interested in becoming Japanese Garden Docents. You do not have to be an expert in Japanese Culture or Gardening. All you need is a desire to learn and a willingness to share that knowledge with our guests. We will provide all the training you'll need including a written docent training manual.

Our guests include school groups from pre-school to college and adults of all ages. Church groups, book clubs, garden clubs and families are some of the types of groups who request tours. As a docent you will be free to choose which and how many tours you would like to lead. No set schedule or hours are required.

Here is what some of our current docents have said about why they love being a docent:

- *When entering the garden you can*

feel the change immediately. You have entered a space so filled with peace and quiet along with natural elements which the Japanese love. Water, stone, wood, different shades of green which soothe you.

- *I love to see children's fascination with the koi and hearing how they describe the garden. My favorite description came from 6 year old Ellie who whispered to her friend "I love this place. It's like a magical forest".*

□ *"It is one of my favorite places to volunteer. The landscape is beautiful no matter what time of the year. It is a Fort Worth treasure!"*

□ *Being a Japanese Garden Docent is invigorating and compelling because of the ever-changing beauty of the garden and the wide variety of tour groups. As a docent, I am involved in teaching-with-enthusiasm and compelled to enter into a discipline of lifelong learning about all*

aspects of the garden. Being a docent keeps me fit physically, intellectually, spiritually, and socially.

□ *I love being a docent because of my love of this exquisite, serene oasis that has something to offer anyone who enters. It is a jewel of Fort Worth and I want to share my passion for it with others. This Japanese Garden gives me such pleasure that I want to give back and share it with anyone who will listen.*

- *It's the most flexible docent program in town. You're free to help when you want but if you want to leave town for a month.....no problem!*

□ *I am Japanese born and raised and today I enjoy how the Fort Worth Japanese Gardens illustrate the traditional ways of Japan's life, past and present. Pagodas, bridges, a stone lantern and a tea house, all clustered in a Japa-*

nese landscape with ancient messages hidden beneath. Sharing this community and traditions with visitors is a satisfying remembrance of my past, even a learning environment for me too! I want our guests to enjoy their visit and leave with satisfying examples of the richness in Japanese culture and history.

To get ready for the autumn tour season, we will run a four week training program beginning in September. Each week a trainer will cover a different subject and lead two identical training sessions. You will be free to attend whichever weekly session fits your schedule best. All training sessions will last two hours. By week 5 you and your fellow trainees will practice giving tours to each other and a trainer!

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Japanese Garden Docents Needed continued

Week 1 – Garden Protocols and Docent Training Manual Info: Tuesday 9/12 10:00 -12:00 or Wednesday 9/13 1:00-3:00

Week 2 – History of the garden: Tuesday 9/19 10:00-12:00 or Wednesday 9/20 1:00-3:00

Week 3 – Japanese Culture: Tuesday 9/26 10:00 -12:00 or Wednesday 9/27 1:00-3:00

Week 4 – Botanicals and Animals: Tuesday 10/3 10:00 -12:00 or Wednesday 10/4 1:00-3:00

Week 5 – Practice Sessions: Tuesday 10/10

10:00 -12:00 or Wednesday 10/11 1:00-3:00

Please contact Diane Jones with question or to sign up.



From a Master Gardener's Kitchen

Herbed Tomatoes
3 Tbls olive oil
2 minced cloves garlic
1 pint grape tomatoes
2 Tbls chopped fresh basil

2 Tbls chopped fresh parsley
1 tsp salt
Pepper to taste
Parmesan cheese
Heat Olive oil, add minced garlic for 30 seconds. Add toma-

atoes and seasonings, reduce heat and toss for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with Parmesan.

From the kitchen of Lena Goff



This photo of Wanda & Karl Stutzman with the new gate received 920 views on Facebook!

Like Us On Facebook!

The Tarrant County Master Gardeners Facebook page is currently "liked" by 812 people...are you one of them?

Facebook is a great way to enjoy current pictures of all of the cool stuff that is happening in our Association, as well as a way to check out the flyers for upcoming educational opportunities.

Here's an interesting tidbit...the drone video of our Demonstration Garden has been viewed 1,865 times! That's a lot of hits!

Thanks to Gay Larson for managing our Facebook page and posting so many wonderful pictures.

From the President's Corner

June had many activities, so a big thanks to all of you who volunteered. You are the heart of our Association. Sharing my last two weeks. I decided to redo my front flower beds, taking out shrubs and replacing them with perennials and annuals. I spread the last of the mulch and stood back, to pat myself on the back and admire my finished project...beautiful, a nice change and the ability to change out plants for fall color. Well, I am always kept humble and thankful. It began to rain a little after midnight and by the

next morning, we had almost 4" of rain. I spent the next 2 days shoveling the mulch that had washed down the sidewalk, back into the beds. I am very thankful for the rain, the drop in temperature and I feel blessed that I am still able to work in my garden. All is right with the world when I am caring for the earth.

The older I get the faster the months pass. It's July already! I hope you enjoy your July 4th weekend with your family, celebrating independence and freedom. If you're vacationing, be safe, have fun and please share your

exciting adventures.

I have attached a photo of a crepe myrtle in my garden. "Red Rocket," for the "Rocket's red flares, the bomb's bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there!"



Hugs! Judy