

Tarrant County Master Gardeners



TEXAS A & M AGRILIFE EXTENSION AGENCY

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Snow Sisters Project Completed!

In early 2019 a group of Tarrant County Master Gardeners began plans for a fundraising event that would be educational to the community as well as to members of the Master Gardener Association. Several well known personalities were considered to encourage public participation and justify an admission charge.

At that time the Snow Sisters had a TV show on the DIY channel, “Texas Flip and Move.” A Master Gardener had a business relationship with them and suggested we talk with Donna Snow.

In October 2019 Donna was enthusiastically received by a large group and \$2400 was raised through an admission charge. Donna suggested to the Association that the Master Gardeners team with their group to landscape a veteran’s home that she would rehab.

Then came Covid19 and things came to a standstill. Early in 2021 plans began again and meetings with Donna Snow resumed. Roll Call, an organization of WWII veterans, provided names of veterans to consider.

Mrs. Clara Shipp was selected as the recipient of the project. Mrs. Shipp is a 95 year old widow of a WWII Navy veteran. She is disabled and does not have the resources to maintain a landscape or home repairs. Continued on next page.



Left, an “after” photo of Mrs. Shipp’s home. Above, Sue Kelley at work.

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Snow Sisters Project Completed!

Tarrant County Master Gardeners did the landscape design and the Snow Sisters provided members of a volunteer rodeo group who worked along side Master Gardeners to install the design. The Snow Sisters production company along with Nancy Curl and Claire Alford filmed the project from beginning to completion. As the Rodeo & Master Gardener volunteers worked, the Master Gardeners took the time to provide education.

The Association is excited to be an integral part of this project, believing we are “making a difference.”



Some before and after photographs of the home.

Demonstration Rose Garden

The rose garden at the demonstration garden was designed by a Master Gardener who dedicated it to his son who died in Afghanistan. Many of the original roses have been lost due to rose rosette disease that has been spreading throughout the Dallas–Ft. Worth area. Some of the lost roses were recently replaced using plants propagated by Master Gardeners from healthy rose cuttings obtained at the Ft. Worth Botanic Gardens and later by new rose bushes acquired for their very long blooming period from spring to fall and their excellent resistance to disease.

The roses growing in this garden show a wide variety of shapes, sizes and colors. The new lead of the garden, Marie-Josie Smith, has introduced native blooming plants among the roses in the spirit of the English cottage gardens and incorporated plantings in soft blues, light pink, purple and white for year round appeal and providing nectar for the pollinators. Marie-Josie's co-lead is Stinson Jones. They meet every Tuesday morning. The tasks are not difficult. Weeding and pruning. Twice or three times a year they fertilize and when necessary they spray organically. Three times a year they like to have mulch put on the garden and it is really when volunteers are really needed.



A note from the Editor. I would like to focus on a different area of our Demonstration Garden with each Newsletter. If you are a Lead for an area, please reach out to me at lgrandclair@gmail.com and let's do yours in July!

Lorie Grandclair-Diaz

Tarrant County Master Gardeners

Goldenball Leadtree, *Leucaena retusa*

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

This is a deciduous, slender shrub or small tree with many showy balls of golden-yellow flowers throughout spring and summer. It blooms yellow from April to October. It is a small, multi-trunked tree or large shrub, 12-15 ft. tall, which can reach 25 ft. Airy, light-green foliage occurs on brittle stems. Bark is flaky and cinnamon colored. Sweet smelling flowers occur in 1 in., yellow-orange globes and will appear after every rain from summer through fall. This attractive, small tree is sometimes cultivated in warm regions for the showy yellow flowers and conspicuous pods. It is a good browse plant for cattle. Goldenball leadtree is a gorgeous small tree that grows well in rocky soil. The yellow puffball flowers exude a sweet aroma. Its wood is rather weak and has been known to snap in strong winds. Open enough that sun-loving species can bloom underneath. Grows in part shade. Grows easily from fresh seed. Semi-hardwood cuttings in the summer will root.



Worth the Wait

Twenty + years ago I had a pot of small Aloe Vera plants to use for burns. I kept potting up one larger on through the years, always asking myself “Why are you doing this? Just get rid of the thing!”

I guess this is maybe why I kept it. First bloom!

Margaret Shuping’s Garden



Happy Birthday to Gay!

Union Gospel Mission volunteers celebrated Gay Larson’s birthday with a party at Joe T’ Garcia’s on May 24.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners

Naturally Cool

*By Laura M. Miller, County Extension Agent, Commercial Horticulture
Sharecropper – June 2010*

Summertime officially begins in June, but here in North Texas it can start early and end late. Keeping cool is a priority for many Metroplexians and air conditioning units work round the clock to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures. However, there is another way, and it is literally green. Use plants to keep cool this summer.

Plants cool us down in two ways. They provide shade and they transpire. Shade is a valuable commodity in warm climates where well over half of residential energy consumption can be attributed to air conditioning. Transpiration is a little more complicated but still provides significant cooling benefits.

Forecasting Sunshine with a Touch of Shade

Strategically placed deciduous trees (those that lose their leaves in winter) can reduce cooling costs in the summer while allowing for passive heating from the sun in the winter. An American Forests study in Dade County (Miami) Florida, a very warm and humid place, found that trees provided direct energy savings equaling 3.3% of total consumption. The same study estimated that the addition of one mature tree in the right place per residence would provide an additional 6.4% energy savings.

Dr. David Laband, Professor of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University in Alabama, another hot place, recently concluded that electricity usage and associated costs will be 11.5 % less if a house has just 17.5 % shade coverage when compared to a house with no shade. His study of 160 houses in the Auburn area covered an entire year but found the greatest impact of trees in the months of May through September. The study calculated shade coverage for each house, analyzed power bills and surveyed homeowners about household make up, electricity usage habits, types of appliances, building materials and other factors.

Late afternoon shade, which is best provided by trees and shrubs on the west side of a building, provided the greatest energy savings. The next best way to save energy was to raise the thermostat. He found an energy savings of 3.3% for each degree increase in temperature. What's the best way to use more energy? Have children under age 12 in the house. They are the major power consumers: watching television, playing video games and leaving the lights on.

Dr. Laband hopes his finding will encourage real estate developers to preserve existing trees when constructing new houses. He found significant differences in energy use between older homes with large trees and new homes without, despite the fact that newer homes had more energy efficient appliances.

Growing a shade tree is a long-term undertaking, but shrubs and vines can provide some late afternoon shade relatively quickly when properly sited on the west side of a structure.

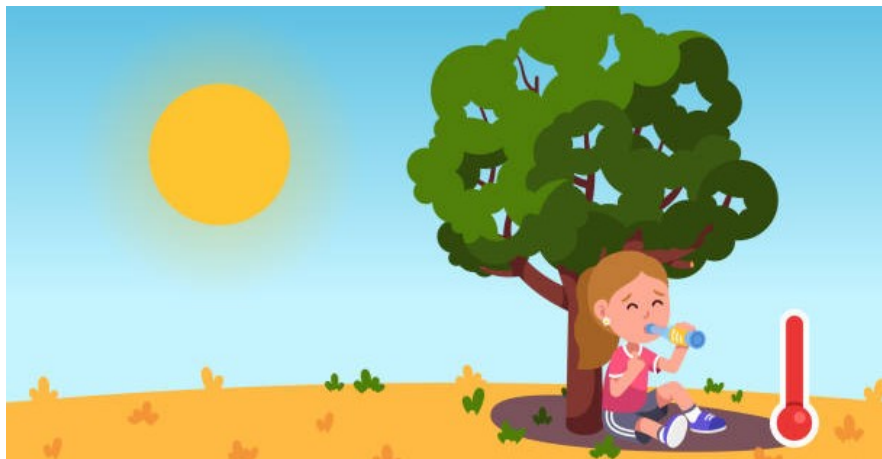
Naturally Cool

Evaporation, Transpiration, and Cooler Temperatures

Everyone who has stepped out of a shower has experienced the cooling effects of evaporation, the change in state that occurs when liquid water becomes water vapor. Transpiration is the movement of water through a plant. All plants transpire. Water vapor is released from the stomata of plants and moves into the atmosphere. Both processes consume heat energy and cool the surrounding air.

Chris Martin, Professor of Horticulture at Arizona State University (ASU) reports that recent studies at ASU have shown that during hot summer afternoons, the surfaces of homes next to a healthy summer lawn can be as much as 10 degrees cooler than similar homes surrounded by desert landscaping. The term 'Desert Landscaping' is used to describe a turf free landscape that features desert plants and often inorganic mulch, such as stone. The key to cooling with transpiration is simply the volume of plant material. There is a direct correlation between leaf surface area and cooling effect.

Plants in any environment create a cooler microclimate by transpiring. You might be able to fry an egg on the cement this summer, but you won't be able to do that on the soccer field. Large plants that provide shade provide cooling benefits. And finally, with apologies to Joyce Kilmer, "I think that I shall never see an air conditioner as lovely as a tree."



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Book Review: “Legends & Lore of Texas Wildflowers”

By Elizabeth Silverthorne

Review by Marilyn Sallee

Sharecropper May 11

If you ever needed to give a talk or write an article about specific plants and wanted to have more to say beyond the usual botanical and horticultural information, this is a definite resource. In “Legends & Lore” the author has gathered far-flung anecdotes, stories, poetry citations, historical allusions and herbal commentary on many of the more common garden plants.

Silverthorne is a free-lance author of many Texas history volumes, all published by Texas A&M Press. Her research abilities are displayed in the intricate and colorful details she has uncovered about plants from all corners of literature. From the poetry and literature of Tennyson, Thackeray and Thoreau to Biblical references and even how the stories of the Ancient Greek myths relate to the flowers, Silverthorne has grown a rich and colorful field of flower facts in the chapters of her collection.

Her deeply researched areas are so rich, the book could be used as a starting point for a variety of Master Gardener speaker’s programs on Plants in the Bible, Plants in Shakespeare, Plants in Romantic Poetry, or Plants in the Greek Myths, or any other of a dozen similar topics. A whole collection of talking points could be gleaned from this one book on many of those areas, and more. (Just a hint to the Speaker’s Bureau members looking for new topic areas.)

While history and literature are the definite strengths, unfortunately horticulture, while clearly a love, is the weakest element in this book. It makes the title itself misleading. Yes, it is a marvelous collection of legends and lores of many and wide-ranging plants. However the plants she chooses to delve into are more likely to be European and Asian, with a few Texas Native plants. And the “wildflowers” are more likely to be landscape nursery plants and shrubs than naturally occurring Texas wildflowers. But for a Master Gardener, this is but a reference for all types of garden plants.

Taken with that caveat, and that the book might more properly be titled “Legends & Lore of Common or Popular Garden Plants”, those jewels of information shine no less bright. One does need to come to this book with an understanding of botanical families. She treats as separate entities the Agave and the Yucca, both so similar and in the same Agavaceae Family. Yet she also treats as a single entity of the Lily family such diverse species as

the European Madonna Lily and Japanese Easter Lily in the same category as the vine Smilax, the Woodland violet, Wild Onion and Aloe Vera – all very dissimilar from each other.

This makes the book best used, not as a resource for the 44 categories listed in the table of contents, but even better as a resource about the hundreds of individual plants she has unearthed delicious tidbits about.

A sampling of the gems this book offers:

The Greek myth about the nymph Clytie, with golden-yellow hair, falling so deeply in love with Apollo the sun

Book Review: “Legends & Lore of Texas Wildflowers”

god to explain why the head of the sunflower always faces the sun; Clytie’s unrequited love turned her into the sun-following flower.

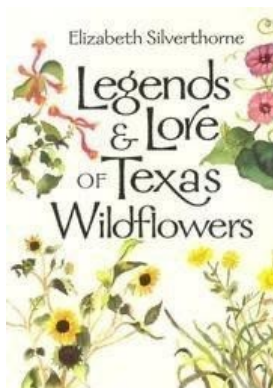
A whole set of Biblical references to thistles, including how the Emperor Charlemagne was directed by an angel to use the thistle plant to cure his army of plague and thus giving it the name “blessed thistle”, *Carduus benedictus*.

Another thistle gem she relates is the story about how Scotland was saved by the thistle. When the Danes invaded Scotland from the coast, their soldiers removed their boots to sneak up on the sleeping Scots. Victory was assured, until a Danish soldier cried out in pain from stepping on a thistle, thus alerting the Scots who woke and sprung into battle.

The Korean legend about a friendship between a magician and a tiger he nursed back to health after being wounded by an arrow. The tiger begged to be kept near his friend after death and be turned into a flower. When the hermit drowned sometime later, the tiger lily now roams the earth looking for his friend.

Historical references about onions, garlic and leeks cite Herodotus’ claim of nine tons of gold used to buy onions to feed the workers on the pyramids, how Roman legions ate garlic for courage, and how Odysseus escaped the sorceress Circe with the use of the plant moly, a type of onion. Those are but a few of the thousands of fascinating facts about plants which Silverthorne has packed into her well written and nicely indexed book.

I highly recommend this book for the richness it can bring you in filling out your understanding and enjoyment of the more humanizing aspects of horticulture. It makes a great collection of short reads to fill odd moments or a reference to keep handy for those illustrative odd facts.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners

Yard Art

From Teddi Zonker

The rooster was the first piece; I wanted a big conversation piece and I always saw the roosters at those art places and thought that would be funny and random. The butterfly, I plant for pollinators and end up raising a LOT of butterflies from my yard, so, it made sense.



Below: Larry Longlegs! I added him after someone said, "all you need now is a giraffe".
From El Sol Mexican Imports, Watauga.



Below Left: This is my 'no more chemo' angel. The day I was finished with chemo, I went shopping to 'celebrate' and she was fitting; along with, again, the butterfly.
Again, from El Sol Mexican Imports, Watauga.



Left: The silliest piece. The butterfly, again...the cardinal reminds me of my parents who have passed and the grey faced cat – my cat is grey.
Again, El Sol.

Yard Art

From Gay Larson

Here are my best pictures of yard art for a few years back and this year.

The butterfly bench was made by a lady and given away as a raffle item at the Parker County Master Gardener plant sale this year.

The boulder is at one of my Parker County Master Gardener projects- Town of Annetta.

The bench is our home.



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Yard Art

From Patti Maness

12 years ago I was driving down the road and saw a family of pot people in a yard. My husband suggested I ask the property owner about them. That inquiry led me down a whole new path of life as I had just retired. The property owner was Gailon Hardin and she introduced me to Master Gardeners and the Native Plant Society. She also loaned me a book on how I could make my own pot person. This is Clay my husband created 12 years ago and still stands today. I took this picture this morning. His full name is Clay Pot-man.



From Nina Hyre

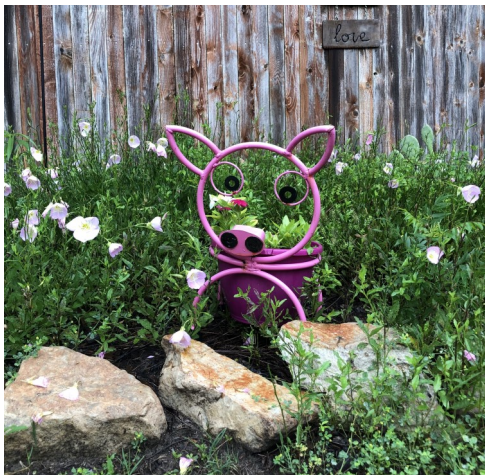
This is a bonsai bougainvillea a friend trained and gifted me 10 years ago. I've had to learn by doing on pruning it. This picture was taken, while it was still in the greenhouse, on April 7, 2021 and what I've been trying to achieve over the years.



Yard Art

From Avon Burton

Pink pig plant stand made me giggle when I saw her in the store. A few days later she showed up sitting on my bed as a gift from my friend.



From Jessica McCraw

Below Left: This is a Frank Lloyd Wright garden sprite surrounded by flowering mock orange. I consider it my meditation garden.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners

Yard Art

From Char McMorrow

My absolute favorite yard art is flying my American Flag.

Watching it wave in the breeze fills me with pride and let's others know how proud I am to be American!



Have a blessed Memorial Day!

Special thanks as always to Theresa Thomas for helping me with content, and I always enjoy including pictures from the gardens of our own members.

Lorie Grandclair-Diaz

Yard Art

From Donna Detzel

This pup is on my kitchen porch and greets visitors who know me as a “dog” person. I may not know the names of everyone in our neighborhood, but I know most of the dogs’ names. The owners are known as “Charlie’s mother” or “Sophie’s dad”. And if the owners are also plant people, well then we are all happy! I like to dress him up in holiday decorations but mostly he wears his tree coin necklace that says “Flower Power”!

