

# Tarrant County Master Gardeners



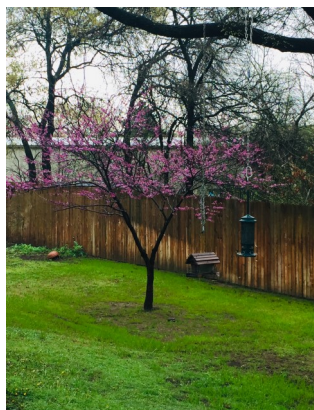
TEXAS A & M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Volume 4 Issue 4

May 2020

## Staying at Home

### Casa Olmsted—Keith Olmsted



A note from the editor:

I have so enjoyed getting emails from fellow Master Gardeners and pictures from their gardens and other cool stuff! Thanks to all who took the time! I hope you all enjoy taking a peek as well. I believe this is my favorite Newsletter so far! Take care and stay well!

Lorie Grandclair-Diaz



New bed being constructed ( now completed ), planters being planted and a wonderful day in my neighborhood. Happy gardening to all and hope to see everyone soon!

# Tarrant County Master Gardeners

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## Staying at Home

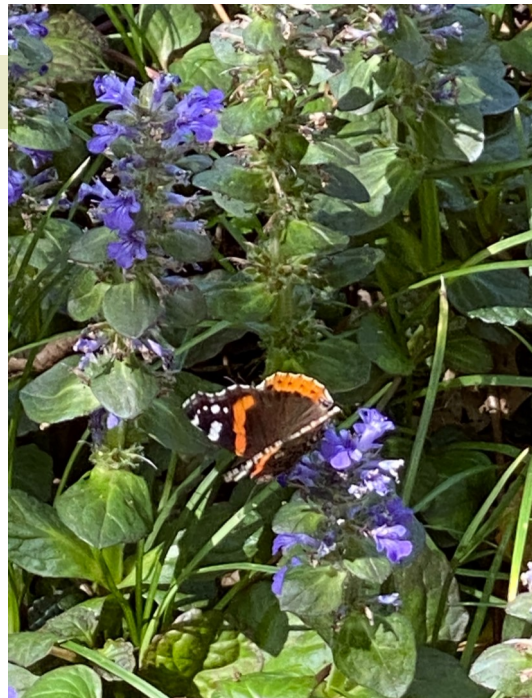
### Eleanor Tuck and the Wild Carrot!



Howdy Lorie, thought you might like this picture of the wild carrot I pulled yesterday. It was growing down behind a retaining wall and I had not been down there recently! I always thought their roots went to China, but this one apparently wanted to stay with us!

ET

### Gus Guthrie is watching and enjoying!





### Staying at Home

#### Meina Sargeant Springtime Photo



These Amaryllis were from classes given at Union Gospel Mission many years ago.

Meina

What to do (with Steve) when you have too much time on your hands.

Donna Detzel



Cowboy



Babushka



Covid

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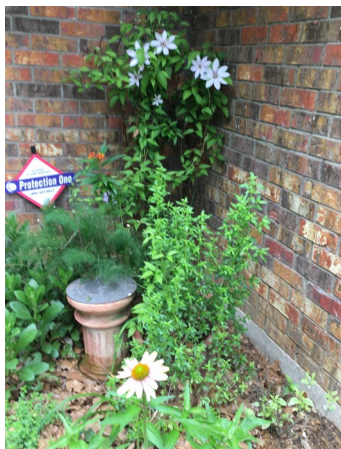
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## Staying at Home

### Debbie Rasmussen

Looking out my living room window I saw a “random act of kindness”. A truck going down the street backwards caught my eye, I looked because it was making a sound no vehicle should. Why the man was backing up I don’t know maybe that was the only gear he had left. The truck finally stopped 4 houses down. As luck would have it, the house he stopped in front of had the only “young” man in the neighborhood - our street is mostly retired folks. The young man came out, got under the truck and worked on it. Then the truck and the driver left. Perhaps the young man was bored, having to stay home and all but it was great he went out and helped like that.

### Sandy Schierling



These are a few weeks ago.  
Now I’ve moved on to  
planting, spreading compost,  
and taking some zoom and  
webex seminars for MG’s!

Sandy



### Staying at Home

Pam Braak—Some photos from our masked work day at Heritage School OLE



### Rene Muhl

Hope you are enjoying the nicer weather and working in your beautiful yard. It will be good when we can all be together again. I miss you and my fellow MGs. Here are some pics of my yard.





# Tarrant County Master Gardeners

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## Staying at Home

### Patsy Miller and Yard Art



Hope you are staying well. You put out a request for yard photos. While I have been working some in my yard, I have been more focused on yard ART. Every couple of years or so it is time to refresh my metal yard art as the paint fades and chips. Usually, I am doing it at night in front of the TV, but these days, I have more time than usual to work on the more needy pieces. For multi-color pieces that I have to paint, I usually use acrylic paint that I have on hand. So that means that it doesn't always look like the original. I top it with clear gloss acrylic spray paint.

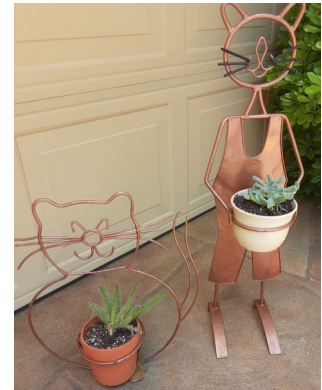
For those I can spray paint one color, I still usually use the colors I have on hand. A great way to use up those leftover cans from projects a year or two ago.

You don't have to be artistic. It is sort of like paint by numbers since the design is pretty much already done for you. You can be the artiste by changing up the colors.

I have individual shots of each piece as well as a group shot, if you just want to use one. You will see a preponderance of cats. In fact, now that I think about it, they all are cats. Although one may be a fox that I want to be a cat.

Won't hurt my feelings if you don't use at all. I had fun doing it and seeing them in my yard makes me smile. Which is what our gardens are supposed to do.

Patsy





### Staying at Home

#### Patsy Miller's curb garden

Hi,

I do have a yard photo, actually my curb. Thought I would take it before the Turks Cap takes over. I can't take credit since most of it is Mother Nature. I think I did plant one phlox plant, which I think is Prairie Phlox because it has bloomed much earlier than other phlox, according to my research. I have dug up several plants for neighbors who love the aroma as well as the plant. The pink evening primrose came there on its own.

Patsy



# Tarrant County Master Gardeners

## Staying at Home

Nancy Taylor

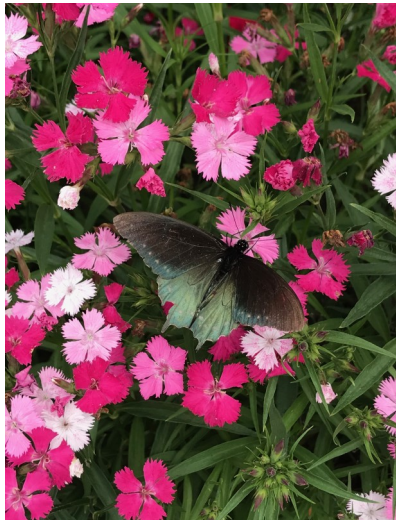


Photo 1 & 2- This beautiful butterfly had such different markings on the inside and outside that I couldn't resist taking it's photo.



Above, Yes, I still have Daffodils blooming! These are Sun-light Sensation, and they are always my last Daffodils to bloom and they last a long time.



I sort of let all of last year's Larkspur go to seed. I've had a pretty display.



A wonderful promise after a brief rain shower.



I made a Neighborhood Bluebonnet photo station for everyone stuck at home. I had several folks taking photos.



### Treating Shrubs that are Iron Deficient

By Gay Larson

AKA Mother Nature

Some of my shrubs this spring, just now putting on new growth, are iron deficient. Every year, the same shrub or perennial show symptoms of iron deficiency. If I do not treat with a chelated iron product, the symptoms ( yellow leaves between the dark green veins) lasts the whole year. Do not use the spray directly on the plant method, it does not solve the problem. I like using the liquid iron product at the base of plant because I am lazy but a granule iron product with chelated iron is the best answer and lasts longer. If it does not say chelated iron on product do not buy it because it takes too long to work. I, also, have observed that the fertilizer with iron does not seem to be strong enough for plants but does work on lawn grasses.

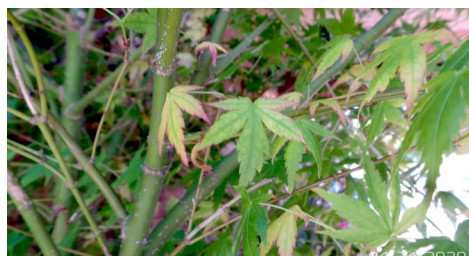
Notice: The leaves on perennials have a spidery look then become whitish and start to die back or be stunted; sometimes the whole plant dies a limb at a time.

Alert: use gloves and do not get on concrete, it will stain your hands and the sidewalk.

Photos below are from Gay's Garden and show plants with Iron deficiency.



Indian Hawthorne



Japanese Maple



John Fannick Phlox



Phlox



## Tarrant County Master Gardeners

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### President's Message

I love Spring!!! Haven't you enjoyed the one thing about the "Staying-At-Home", being able to take the time to walk out the door every day to check out and see if what is new is blooming? I can't help but say "Yippee" when I see a new bloom. Spring is a time of new and renewal.

A Quote from Nancy Curl from an old Newsletter - "Mother Nature made her presence known this spring. She blessed us with a bumper crop of bluebonnets and other wonderful wildflowers; while roses and spring blooming perennials want to outdo each other with their show-stopping blooms as well."

Why do I garden? It is a quiet and rest time for me. But being a Master Gardener, Master Naturalist and NPSOT member is the best. Over my 12 years I have met so many people that love to share their knowledge about so many different things along with their knowledge of gardening. Gardeners are always looking for and trying new methods, new plants and styles of gardening. The best part we get to share, build friendships and memories along the way. Gardeners are always optimistic.

Thank you for sharing your pictures of your gardens with us. They are super!!!!

A couple of things coming up at TCMGA. We will not have a May Meeting. The Silent Auction in June is being postponed for now. We are working on an online plant sale which will be sometime in May. We have been thinking about doing some educational videos and will be asking for your help. Also, time to start thinking about next year. We need a Nominating Committee Chairperson. The Executive Board appoints the Chair, if you are interested let me know. Also, if you like to be on the committee let me know too

See you out and about at the garden,

Theresa

*"A garden to walk in and immensity to dream in—what more could you ask?"*



## Volume 4 Issue 4

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Esperanza—from Hey, Dig This!  
Sharecropper May 2005

Looking for drops of golden sunshine in your garden? Esperanza “*Tecoma stans*” is a stunning perennial with yellow golden bells on a 3-4-foot shrub, which blooms from early summer to frost. A background of dark green glossy leaves showcases these trumpet shaped flowers. In 1999, the cultivar “Gold Star” became one the Texas Superstar plants. Texas Superstars are only given that designation after years of testing to produce the very best plants for our area.

Not only does Esperanza put on a dazzling color display all season, it loves our Texas heat and is drought tolerant. It has relatively few insect and disease problems and will grow in a wide variety of soils including rocky alkaline soil. Esperanza needs full sun and the “beans” should be snipped off to promote more blooms.

HUMMINGBIRDS love these bright bloomers!

Cultivation and maintenance is minimal— always great news! Esperanza is hardy in zones 8-11. In Fort Worth, our hardiness range is 7b-8a, which means Esperanza will usually freeze to the ground. Cut back damaged growth to the ground and give it a good blanket of mulch for the winter. Usually by late March, new growth appears from the roots.

You can use Esperanza as a container (large!) specimen plant or for massed plantings. You can buy established plants from commercial nurseries, grow it from seed, and it can easily be propagated from cuttings. Seedlings are easily transplanted.

Esperanza comes to us from south Texas and northern Mexico and is considered subtropical. It is planted on the medians in San Antonio and TXDOT does not water it once it becomes established. Give it plenty of room—ours grew over six feet tall last year (that’s from the ground in one growing season).

Look for another HEY, DIG THIS! in an up- coming issue.

— by Pat Durda



Content provided by Theresa Thomas



## Tarrant County Master Gardeners

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### Green Thumb is Official

Content Provided by Theresa Thomas

*By Steve Chaney, Texas AgriLife Extension, Tarrant County  
Sharecropper – May 2012*

At last, the “green thumb” has been officially declared a type of intelligence! As a Horticulturist, I was taught that the so-called “green thumb” we’ve always heard about is merely an indication of certain positive human qualities such as the ability to be observant, pay attention to detail, plan ahead, follow through on projects, and be flexible while working with the vagaries of nature.

But, while studying educational psychology in college, I learned of Harvard professor Howard Gardner’s “Theory of Multiple Intelligences” in which he noted and found regions of the brain which “light up” when certain abilities are activated. In addition to the most widely accepted pattern - smart “logical-mathematical” and language-oriented linguistics aptitudes, he also found evidence of body-kinesthetic (athleticism and control in handling objects, such as surgeons possess), spatial (accurate mental visualizations), musical, interpersonal (awareness of other’s feelings and motivations), and intrapersonal (awareness of one’s own feelings and goals).

These seven kinds of intelligence sound complicated. But I always felt that gardeners should be in there somewhere. Look around, and you’ll see people who have an obvious nurturing tendency, and some folks with no formal training in horticulture seem to be gifted with the ability to quickly recognize subtle distinctions in the natural world, and easily relate everyday things to their environment.

And sure enough, now Gardner has found physical evidence of an eighth intelligence, called “Naturalist” intelligence, with its own special brain region that supports it. Simply put, people with naturalist intelligence have the ability to identify and classify patterns in nature and make predictions based on seemingly random events. My great-grandmother Pearl, whose garden sported huge collections of daffodils and wildflowers, had a “Bird Sanctuary” sign in her side yard, which embarrassed us as kids because we thought people would think our family weird. But it was she who showed me the difference between black-eyed Susan and purple coneflower, and how caterpillars eat flowers but turn into butterflies without really harming the flowers in the long run. She explained how a bird’s wing works and showed me how to tell if pecans were moldy before bending down to pick them up by stepping on them to see if they were firm or soft.

Naturalists like Pearl are very comfortable out-doors; when on vacation, they watch people, or go to a botanical garden rather than a ball game or opera. They are constantly aware of their surroundings, looking around as they drive, watching weeds and hawks, and braking for the butterflies. They observe, touch, and compare even “yucky” things, and often collect stuff – shells, rocks, and flowers (often in mixed cottage gardens, or extensive collections of roses or daylilies or African violets).

They also manipulate things to see what happens; ever-curious plant hybridizers fall into the category of naturalist, as do “giant tomato” or “perfect lawn” gardeners. So do wildflower enthusiasts, bonsai artists, bird watchers, and garden teachers, whose naturalist leanings are coupled with strong interpersonal and linguistic abilities.

Any of this apply to you? Mix in doses of other intelligences, and no wonder gardeners have such different approaches, and levels of success and satisfaction. We may not all be smart – but we sure are intelligent!



### Green Thumb is Official continued

Now you have special bragging rights for being intelligent, next time you're at a family reunion you can tell everyone you may not be smart, but you're sure "Intelligent".

This article was an excerpt from a wonderful book written by a colleague and a friend of mine, Felder Rushing. *The book is titled 'Tough Plants for Southern Gardens' and should be a mainstay of your personal library.*

### Memories From the Past—Our First Plant Sale!

by Taddie Hamilton Tarrant County Master Gardeners Plant Sale Chairperson 2009  
Sharecropper – May 2009

What a wonderful day! The First Annual Master Gardener Plant Sale was a grand success. At 9 a.m., the sun came out, the day warmed and the wind that almost blew us away on Thursday decreased to a breeze! A line of people with their wagons were waiting when we opened the gate! We sold more than 3000 plants, 250 roses, and 25 rain barrels! More than 75 MGs volunteered to help almost 300 families who came to admire our Community Garden and purchase plants.

We had great publicity from the Star Telegram, Dallas Morning News, Neil Sperry, Dotty Woodson and multiple flyers placed in schools and businesses and emailed by you to hundreds of friends and neighbors.

It was amazing to hear people say they didn't know the Garden was there. Several families indicated they would like a bed to tend to teach their children the thrill of growing their own food.

On Thursday, after the Master Gardener meeting, many MGs came to the garden to support our organization. It was thrilling to see all those plants going out of the gate to MG landscapes! Thank you for supporting the sale. It took a big team who worked extremely hard to make the day a success. Jeanie Browning chose Texas SuperStar plants, easy to grow and beautiful! Larry Matl, Donna Morris and their team collected the money at a steady pace. Claire Alford lead a team who helped people learn about the Heritage plants and how to care for them. Marilyn Sallee created the signs we used along the roads and created instructions of care for many of the Heritage Plants. Ginger Bason and her team answered questions from the public on taking care of their landscapes. Cathy Sabin distributed flyers all over the area and even into Mansfield! Susan Stanek made sure the Garden Clubs in the area had flyers and information. Eleanor Tuck oversaw the distribution of various Extension publications and even recruited people for the next Master Gardener Class. Pat Higgins and Lynn Hayes kept watch over the plants in the Holding Area. Tom Scott and his team built 25 rain barrels and sold them all! And of course, Steve Chaney, Nancy Curl and Pat Higgins did all the behind the scenes work to make the sale a success. This was such fun. Thanks for all your support and we'll do it again next year!!!

# Tarrant County Master Gardeners

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## Phlox - The Surprising Flower

Sharecropper May 2005

Imagine strolling through a cutting garden on a balmy summer day, basket and shears in hand. As you gather a bouquet of colorful flowers, you notice a tiger swallowtail sipping nectar from a fat cluster of pink blossoms. Soon you're inhaling the plants sweet perfume, and you are as captivated by garden phlox (*Phlox paniculata*) as the butterflies, bumblebees and moths that pollinate it.

If you like to have butterflies in your summer garden, then summer phlox should be a staple in your flowerbeds. In mid-summer, when the spring flowers have faded, summer phlox will bring clouds of butterflies to your garden and even attract a few hummingbirds. In addition, you will have bouquets of fragrant flowers that can be used as cut flowers in the house.

*Phlox paniculata* is native in the eastern third of the United States. In the 1700s Europeans found these plants growing wild in damp meadows, along forest edges and in the rich soils of flood plains and saw their potential as garden plants. Their showy, fragrant flowers quickly became a hit throughout Europe and by the mid 1800s they were commonly available in the nursery trade. They didn't re-cross the Atlantic until Victorian times. By the 1950s there were hundreds of varieties available as the result of breeding programs in England, Russia, Germany and Holland. As a result, many varieties were planted throughout Europe and North America but in the intervening years many of these have disappeared from the commercial trade. The wildflower of muddy-purple hue had been transformed into a sophisticated garden flower, available in shades of red, purple, pink or white. Today's choices include a multitude of cultivars. Although garden phlox (also called summer phlox) is the most common offering at nurseries, there are more than sixty species of phlox. Phlox can be tall, with thick, glossy leaves, or it can spread across the ground with needle-like leaves. It can be a midsummer sun-lover or bloom in shady woods in April. All forms have five petals, often with a colored eye, on a tubular base. In midsummer, when spring flowers have faded, summer phlox will bring clouds of butterflies to your garden and even attract a few hummingbirds. Although summer phlox is common to old gardens throughout the southeastern United States, the number of varieties found in old Texas gardens are limited.

In general, summer phlox prefer fertile soils high in organic matter, but both 'John Fanick' and 'Victoria' (the name given to the old standard garden phlox) perform fairly well in less desirable situations. These flowers - John Fanick and Victoria summer phlox - have been named Texas Superstars™ by Texas A&M University, which means they will be top performers in the garden. In general, these perennials can grow to more than 3 feet in height, but fertility will greatly influence ultimate plant height. Both varieties grow in full sun to light shade but are best in full sun. A mulch layer helps keep the root zone cool. Remove faded flower panicles to prolong bloom period. To propagate them, you can divide clumps in the spring or take tip cuttings in spring and early summer.

The genus name, *Phlox*, is derived from the Greek word for flame. *Phlox* is sometimes called flame flower because of its intense, hot colors.

Only one species, *Phlox drummondii* (Polemoniaceae), is an annual. The bright red flowers of this Texas native attracted the attention of Thomas Drummond, a British naturalist, in the 1820s. He sent seeds to Europe, where the plant was bred into a variety of colors. It became a popular bedding plant, returning to



### Phlox Continued

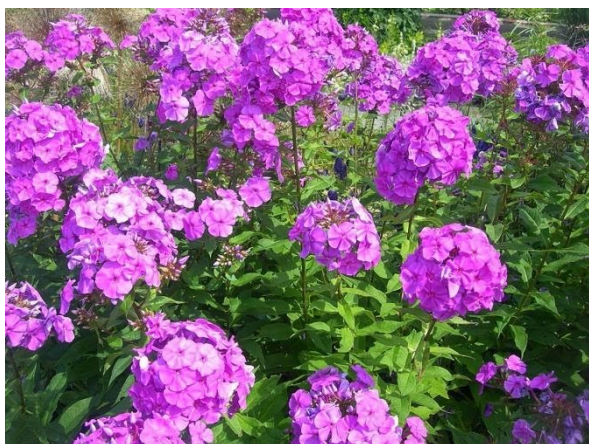
charm Americans four decades later. It is a short, hardy, upright annual, adapted throughout the southeastern United States and a variety that has been used extensively in European gardens for many decades. Flowers are concentrated in clusters on top of sturdy, erect stems. Average planting success with this species is 70%. They grow 8-24 inches in height.

Powdery mildew is quite common with phlox and easily treatable. Simply apply Orthonex which is both a fungicide and pesticide. Some practices will help to minimize mildew infestation: plant in full sun; water at ground level instead of using a sprinkler; thin out stems to increase air movement; and remove infected foliage in the fall so mildew spores can't overwinter. The summer phlox has fragrant flowers in clusters, that come in summer through November. Summer Phlox like moist, well drained, rich soils. Steps for caring for Summer Phlox are listed below.

1. Divide your Summer Phlox every couple of years and check them for powdery mildew and spider mites after mid-summer.
2. Cut old stems to the ground late fall or early spring and allowed to sprout with new stems.
3. Apply a light application of organic fertilizer to the top of the soil in early spring.
4. Mulch around, but not on top of, plants with 3 inches of organic mulch.
5. Water well weekly - until soil is completely moist - in summers with no rainfall.

The preference is partial sun, moist conditions, and fertile loamy soil. Light shade is tolerated, but flowers will be produced less abundantly. In full sun, the leaves have a tendency to turn yellowish green and the plants are in greater danger of drying out. Remember, "You're in Texas."

—The Editor



# Tarrant County Master Gardeners

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## May Garden Tips

By Marilyn Sallee  
Sharecropper May 2008

Content provided by Theresa Thomas

May is your last chance to get in some showy flowers before the heat of summer hits. It is a good time to tidy up the corners of your yard and take a good look at how things are growing.

### Planting & propagating:

May is the time to plant caladium tubers, impatiens, coleus, begonias, and pentas in well-prepared shady areas. Set out plants of hybrid portulaca (purslane) in sunny areas. Make cuttings of your favorite colors of portulaca or your favorite chrysanthemums and root them in a mixture of sand and peat moss. Cover cutting box with plastic and place in shaded area for 5 or 6 days to prevent wilting.

It is not too late to sow directly into the soil seeds of sunflower, zinnia, morning glory, portulaca, marigold, cosmos, periwinkles, and gourds. Achimenes, cannas, dahlias, and other summer-flowering bulbs can also be planted in May.

### Tidying up:

Take a walk through your yard to enjoy the garden and visit your flowerbeds with an eye for fine-tuning. Replace or replenish mulch materials in flowerbeds and shrub borders to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. Pinch back the terminal growth on newly planted annual and perennial plants. This will result in shorter, more compact, well-branched plants with more flowers. Check for insects and diseases. Destroy badly infested plants. Aphids and spider mites can be especially troublesome at this time. Select a chemical or organic control or use insecticidal soap.

The daffodils, narcissus and other spring-blooming flower have finished their show but allow the foliage of spring-flowering bulbs to mature and yellow in the beds. This allows the plant to store energy for next year's blooms. You can tie up bundles of the leaves with a pretty yellow ribbon for garden interest.

Prune climbing roses as they complete their spring bloom season. Remove dead or weak wood as needed. Continue to fertilize roses every four to six weeks with small amounts of a balanced fertilizer.

### Continued care & planning:

Now is the time to look at your garden as it approaches its peak. What is working and what needs to be fine-tuned or changed entirely. Take photos and make notes of how you think it can be better arranged, what needs to be cut back or removed. Keep a look out for possible activity areas that can be enjoyed by family members.

### Mulch-mulch-mulch :

As the heat of summer approaches, soil moisture becomes essential for good plant display. Water is a precious resource, so it pays to conserve the moisture around plants. A good mulch will retain essential moisture, act as food for the plants, keep the soil cooler, and improve overall gardening success. Apply mulch 2 to 6 inches deep, depending on the material used. In general, the coarser the material, the deeper the mulch. As the mulch decays it releases nutrients slowing for plant roots to take up.



### Staying at Home - The Last Page

Wanda Stutzman



I am blessed with family, friends and garden buddies. There are two buddies in the pic.

Quarantine day 156. Well feels like it. Wednesday Mash up. Store bought flowers mixed with garden flowers. Trying my hand at farm fresh floral design.

