

Here's the Dirt

KIMBERLY MAYER, CEA - HORTICULTURE

Brazoria County

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

January Happenings

2024

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Can you believe it's 2024? A brand new year with all kinds of possibilities is upon us. So exciting! As I reflect on what 2023 brought us, I think of the 2023 Intern Class and how motivated and ambitious they were. Of the 23 interns, 17 have already been certified. What an accomplishment! We also had 10 Junior Master Gardener lessons out at Harvest for the Hungry. That's a great start to this newly formed program. Many of you were speakers at the dozens of speaking events that we offered and we met hundreds of youth and adults in our outreach events. Our 2023 Plant and Tree Sales were highly successful as was the first annual Strawberry Jamboree. With results like this, our 2024 is sure to be a great success. I'm looking forward to it and I hope you are too.

What's Growing On...

JMG Lesson at Harvest
for the Hungry
01/06/2024

January Board Meeting
01/09/2024 9am BEES

January General
Meeting
01/12/2024 10am
@AgriLife

JMG Lesson at Harvest
for the Hungry
01/20/2024

Online Tree Sale goes
Live on Square 01/20 -
01/21/2024

2024 Intern Class 8:30
am @BEES

TTT - Backyard Citrus
01/27/2024 9 am - 11
am @Agrilife

Here's the Dirt

January Horticulture Hero: Rose Wagner

If you want to start the New Year off right, then there is someone we should recognize and that is Rose Wagner. What can't this woman do?

Not only is she a Certified Master Gardener, but she is also a Master Naturalist. Wow! That's huge accomplishment and a whole lotta hours to put in and record. We are so lucky to have her as an asset to this organization.

Here are just a few of the amazing things that Rose does:

She is head of the Intern Training Committee. And believe me, that is a year round task. It takes monthly meetings, lots of planning, organization, coordination and patience to pull off training 20+ interns. Rose manages the monthly meetings to make sure that all the members of the Training Committee are on the same page and that we provide these new interns with quality programming and lessons. Not only is she there every Thursday for the classes, but she also comes to the General Meetings to recognize those that have become certified and present them with their name tag and apron. It's an organizational mountain of things to do and lists to check off, but Rose is right there making sure that it all goes smoothly.

Rose is also the Treasurer of the Horticulture Committee. If you're not familiar with this group, the Brazoria Horticulture Committee is made up of 12 community leaders who meet quarterly to discuss and advise our Horticulture Agent on the educational programming that is offered in Brazoria County. This committee was started about a year ago and Rose jumped at the opportunity to not only serve on this committee, but to also be the Treasurer for us. And believe me when I say, that Tracie and Kimberly keep her busy with check requests, bank statements and orders for items that our educational programs may need.

And if that wasn't enough, Rose has been a true blessing out at Harvest for the Hungry during our Junior Master Gardener lessons. She's a great help for keeping us prepped and ready to go for each lesson as well as snack time. She even took the lead a few weeks ago and taught the lesson on composting herself. What a trooper!

Please help me recognize Rose Wagner as January's Horticulture Hero of the Month for January 2024. Way to go, Rose!



Here's the Dirt

Nominate a Horticulture Hero

We truly have an amazing group of individuals within the Brazoria County Master Gardener Association. I wanted to make sure that we recognize and fully appreciate our volunteers on more than just a yearly basis. That's where this program comes in to play. I would love for you to send me your nominations for a monthly Horticulture Hero. The requirements are simple. Just send me an email with a paragraph explaining why this individual should be nominated for this award. I will make the final decision each month and then award that person at the General Meeting. Some examples could be: above and beyond service at an outreach event, behind the scenes planning and coordinating, or even an outstanding presentation to a local group, The possibilities are endless. Get your nominations to me by the last day of the month. Email me : kimberly.mayer@ag.tamu.edu



Here's the Dirt

December Outreach Volunteers



In lieu of doing a gift exchange at our annual Christmas Party, Brazoria County Master Gardeners Association members collected and donated \$1,000 to The Warriors Refuge. Members Tracy Ning, Don Bushman and Cindy Lou Ducros visited The Warriors Refuge to present them with the donation.

Pictured with all 4 BCMGA members is Robert D. Heckler, The Warrior Refuge Director

Pictured with member Tracy Ning is Teresa who runs the Warrior Refuge kitchen

Pictured with member Don Bushman is Jeremy, who is a resident of the refuge and is very excited to get a garden going at the refuge.

Thank you to members who volunteered to lead or assist at the December BCMGA outreach events!
Members shown: Cindy Ducros, Don Bushman, and Tracy Ning.

Here's the Dirt

December Outreach Volunteers



Thank you to members who volunteered to lead or assist at the December BCMGA outreach events! Members pictured: Janice Smith and Horticulture Agent Kimberly Mayer.

Here's the Dirt



Agent's Corner

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Triple T

Trees, Turf and Tomatoes

TEXAS
MASTER GARDENER
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Trees</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"> January 27th \$15 </div> <p>Join us for a class on how to grow Citrus Trees in Brazoria County. Learn from qualified Master Gardeners before you plant your trees from the Fruit and Citrus Tree Sale.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; gap: 20px;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Turf</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"> July 11 th \$15 </div> <p>Join us for a time of intrigue and clues. Come learn how to spot the signs and symptoms that your lawn might be facing after the brutal heat and summer drought. Find out ways to restore some vigor and density to your turf. Let's prepare now for a healthy lawn.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; gap: 20px;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Tomatoes</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"> March 16th \$25 </div> <p>Our very first Tomato Basil Bash! Come learn from Brazoria County Master Gardeners who will teach you the basics of growing tomatoes and basil. A fabulous combination.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; gap: 20px;"> </div>
<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Trees</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"> April 26th FREE! </div> <p>Join us to celebrate Texas Arbor Day by learning all about tree planting 101 and what trees grow best in our area. *Tree giveaway pending.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; gap: 20px;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Turf</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"> April 13th FREE! </div> <p>Join your local Horticulture Agent, Kimberly Mayer for tips on keeping your lawn green. You'll make your neighbors green with envy after this class that teaches the basics of great lawn care.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; gap: 20px;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Tomatoes</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; padding-bottom: 5px;"> June 8th \$25 </div> <p>After you've grown your tomatoes in the spring and early summer, come join us for a tomato tasting and question and answer period with knowledgeable Master Gardeners. We'll also have time for a canning demo from Agent Shana Kutac.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; gap: 20px;"> </div>

To register: <https://brazoria.agrilife.org/events/>

Here's a snapshot of the 2024 Program Plans that we have coming up! Lots of great events!

Here's the Dirt



Agent's Corner

BACKYARD CITRUS
JANUARY 27TH, 2024
9AM -11AM

AGENDA

8:45 - 9:00 AM REGISTRATION

9:00 AM WELCOME- KIMBERLY MAYER,
BRAZORIA COUNTY HORTICULTURE AGENT

9:00 -9:30 AM JANIS TEAS, TDA
CITRUS QUARANTINE AND REGULATIONS

9:30-10:15 AM ANDRA HALNON , TERRY BOHR
BRAZORIA COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS - CITRUS TREES 101

10:15-10:30 BREAK AND CITRUS TASTINGS

10:30 -11:00 AM NICK FELSTED, BRAZORIA
COUNTY MASTER GARDENER - FREEZE
PROTECTION FOR CITRUS TREES

Be sure to join us for our program on Backyard Citrus taught by our very own Brazoria County Master Gardeners. Click here to attend and for more information.

Here's the Dirt



Agent's Corner



This month's Horticulture Hints

Love gardening and taking care of your lawn, but sometimes feel like all the terminology is overwhelming? No need to worry. We've got you covered! Tune in here each month for a [#HorticultureHint](#) from our very own Horticulture Agent, Kimberly Mayer. She'll give a detailed explanation of terms that you may not be aware of or just weren't sure what they mean.

HORTICULTURE HINTS

Aeration:
the process of removing plugs of soil from your lawn in order to break up soil compaction, allowing oxygen and water to reach the root zone.

LEARN NEW GARDENING TERMS EVERY WEEK!



Kimberly Mayer, CEA, CPTM
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Horticulturist

Here's the Dirt

Notes from the Herb Garden



Dill

**By: Joy Hargett and Sandy Henderson
Brazoria County Master Gardeners**



Herb Corner – Dill

Hope everyone is having a good holiday season. It's now fall, almost winter (if we have one in southeast Texas) and for those of you that have grown dill in the past, are probably seeing it in your garden right now. While dill can germinate any time of the year, this cool weather crop starts to appear in our gardens in the fall and seeds will germinate until late spring.

Dill looks very delicate, but like other herbs, is very hardy. During deep freezes, the foliage may be compromised, but if the roots are protected, the foliage will grow right back. Dill has almost no disease problems in our area and plants can grow crowded amongst each other. There is nothing like touching the foliage or seed heads of dill and taking a whiff. Very refreshing!

There are many varieties of dill but the most common we see in Brazoria County is Bouquet. Bouquet will produce plants that reach heights of 2-3 feet. Cut dill can be used as accents to flower or herb bouquets.

Dill is very easy to grow from seeds, but if a seedling is transplanted, be aware that of its long taproot which sometimes doesn't like replanting. For best success, transplant short specimens and water well before and after planting. The dill foliage may fall over after transplant, but usually springs back in a day or two. If it does not, cut off the foliage at the soil like as the roots should produce more foliage.

Dill is mostly used as a garnish or in meats, stews, soups or salads. However, it's most common use is in vegetable canning. Many people love dill pickles. People that make pickles generally like to use both or either dill seed or dill foliage.

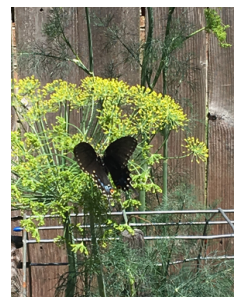
Some cooks, however, like to use dill pollen and it can get expensive. Dill pollen has a very mild scent. To capture dill pollen is fairly easy. As the seed head forms, you will see yellow pollen. Either cut off a seed head and place in a plastic bag and shake – or, attach a plastic bag securely to the seed head in the garden and shade. Particles of pollen will fall off the seed head.

Allowing the seed head to go to seed is the most common method for culinary use. Capture seeds as you captured pollen. Spread the seeds in a container or on a plate and allowing seeds to sit out a few days to a couple of weeks. This will ensure that any moisture evaporates so there is not mildew occurring in a closed

container. Be sure to keep the seeds out of drafts, otherwise seeds will fly everywhere. After harvesting, dill seeds can be kept for long periods of time and can be used in cooking/canning or to grow more dill in the garden.

As the days warm up in late spring, dill will generally die off. It is possible to grow dill in the summer in shade, although it will need to be kept well-watered. It may not reach heights of 2-3 feet, but it can produce pollen and seed heads.

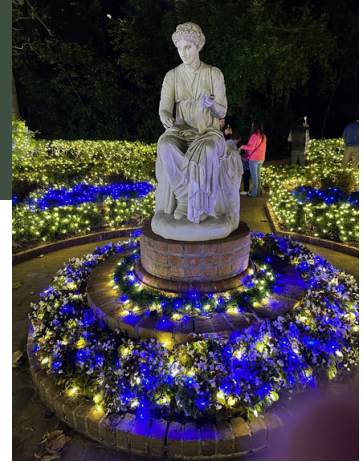
Plant dill!!! Swallowtail butterflies love this stuff and you might see them frequently in your garden of dill.



Here's the Dirt

Destinations

By: Mark Mckee
Brazoria County Master Gardener



Happy New Year! Here's hoping that you and your family had a joyous holiday season and are looking forward to the return of Spring!

Even with all of the preparations for family gatherings, Teri and I managed to get out to see one of our favorite places, one we have visited many times over the years. But this time was a little different since we were going to see it by night, decorated for Christmas!

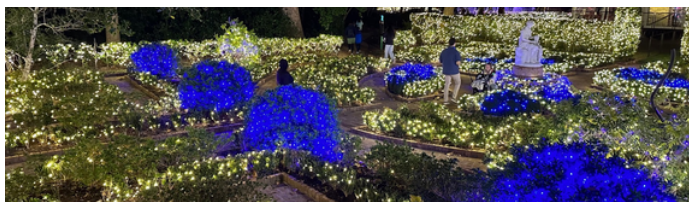
Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens is an amazing place to visit. If you like history, antique furniture, decorative arts, fine arts or gardening & landscaping, you will find it at Bayou Bend. Bayou Bend is a 14-acre site in River Oaks, a neighborhood developed by the Hogg family. Ima Hogg, daughter of James Hogg, the first native Texan governor, worked with architect John Staub to design the Bayou Bend residence. At the same time, she began planning and building the gardens that surround the house and worked to retain as many of the onsite trees into the design as possible. Miss Ima is credited with introducing plants like azaleas and camellias to the Houston area, and many of these plants feature in the garden design. The gardens are divided into eight formal areas, three named for the statues of goddesses or muses in them and the East, White, Butterfly and Carla gardens. These gardens were designed as outdoor rooms for dining and entertaining. Miss Ima moved into the Bayou Bend house in 1928. In 1957, she donated the home, gardens and the family art collection to the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. She moved out of the house in 1965, and the site was opened to the public in 1966.

We chose to visit during "Christmas Village at Bayou Bend", an event where the house and gardens are decorated for Christmas, and entertainment for families is spread throughout the gardens. All the gardens were decorated with Christmas lights and seasonal flowers, and the house was decorated inside and out for the Christmas season. To entertain parents and children, the theme of the event was that Santa's sleigh had had a rough landing and the reindeer were scattered throughout the garden, sending everyone on a scavenger hunt to find all of Santa's reindeer. Entertainment also included a sledding hill, a snowball fight area, and of course, Santa Claus. The decorations inside of the house were spectacular and performers in each room provided living entertainment for everyone.

The gardens at Bayou Bend are amazing any time of the year, but seeing them at night, decorated for Christmas was magical. The statuary, the fountains, and all of the garden plants highlighted for the season showed us a new perspective of things we had only seen by daylight before! This was a very special destination and we look forward to doing it again next year.

If you have never been there, add Bayou Bend to your destination list. If you have been there before, it may be time for a return trip. The house, gardens and visitor's center are worth a visit, and the Texas history and philanthropic story of Miss Ima and the Hogg family is one worth knowing.

We stopped to eat dinner at Truth BBQ. Rated #3 in the latest Texas Monthly Magazine Top 50 Texas BBQ joints, it is a great place for BBQ aficionados! Arrive early on the weekends, because the lines can be long, and they do run out of things as the day progresses.



Here's the Dirt

Destinations

By: Mark Mckee
Brazoria County Master Gardener

Bayou Bend Collection & Gardens
6003 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77007
www.mfah.org

UPCOMING DESTINATION EVENTS:

Radiant Nature (Nov 17, 2023 to Feb 25, 2024)
Glass in Flight (Oct 21, 2023 to April 14, 2024)

Houston Botanic Garden
One Botanic Lane
Houston, TX 77017
www.hbg.org

2024 Azalea Trail
River Oaks Garden Club
Friday, March 8 to Sunday, March 10

River Oaks Garden Club
2503 Westheimer Rd.
(713)523-2483
www.riveroaksgc.org

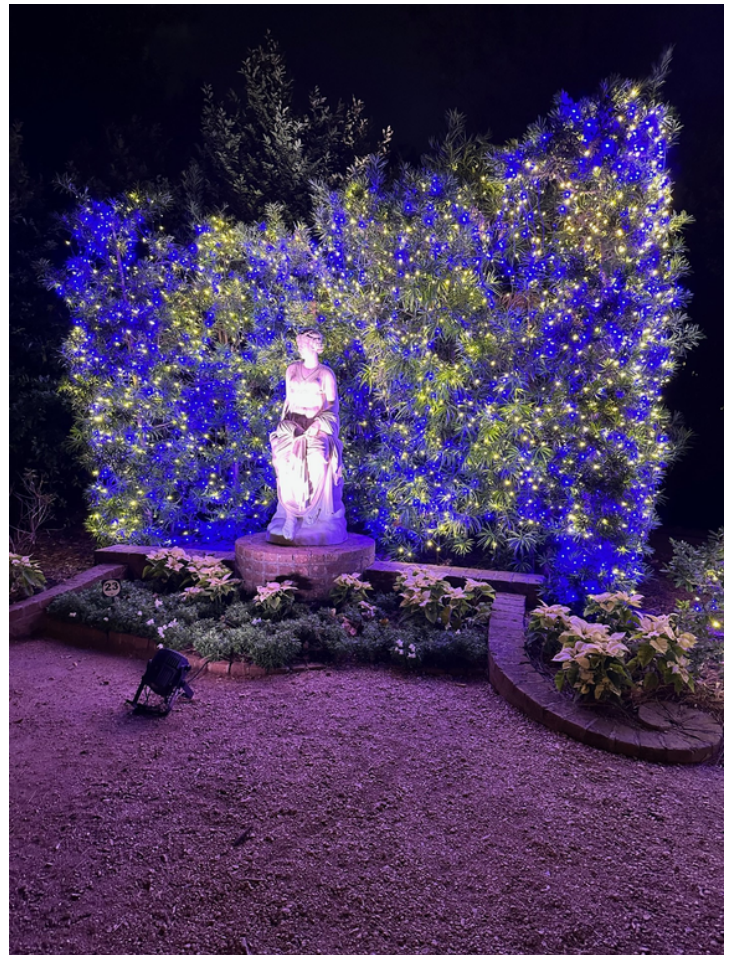
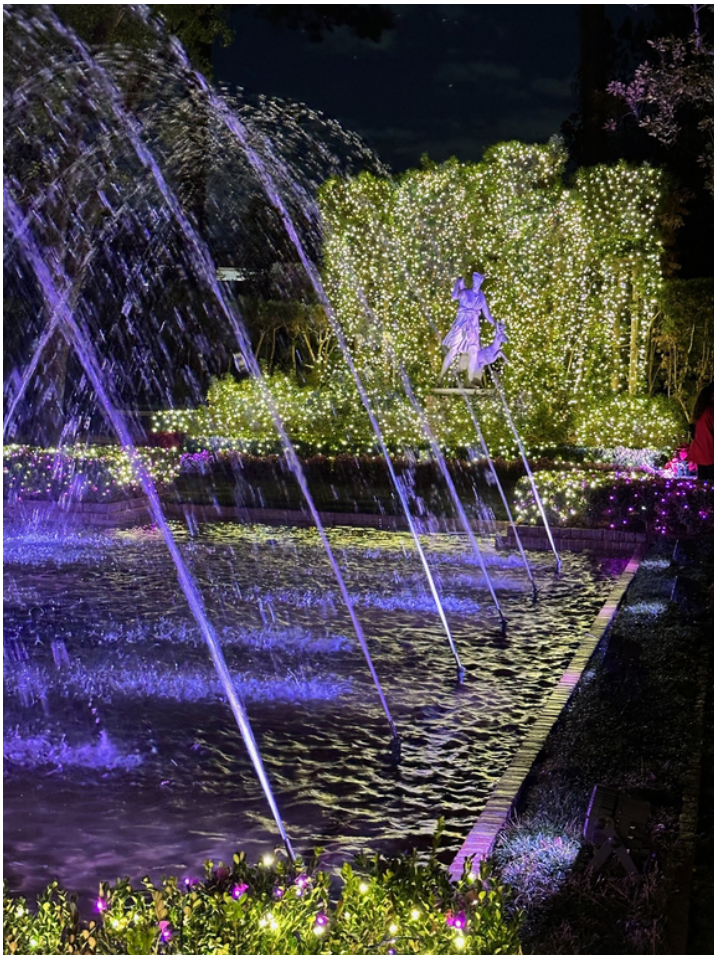
(If you have a suggestion for a destination, or would like to contribute a DESTINATIONS story, please let Kimberly Mayer or I know. Also, if you visit one of the destinations we have highlighted, please let me know. I would love to hear about your experience!)



Here's the Dirt

Destinations

By: Mark Mckee
Brazoria County Master Gardener



Bayou Bend Collection & Gardens
6003 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77007
www.mfah.org

Here's the Dirt

Destinations

By: Mark Mckee
Brazoria County Master Gardener



Bayou Bend Collection & Gardens
6003 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77007
www.mfah.org

Here's the Dirt

Destinations

By: Mark Mckee
Brazoria County Master Gardener



Bayou Bend Collection & Gardens
6003 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77007
www.mfah.org

Here's the Dirt

Writers wanted!



If you enjoy writing about gardening and would like contribute an article or two to our newsletter, please feel free to reach out and let me know. I'd love to have you participate in this newsletter. I am looking for short but informative articles that speak to a variety of interests. It can be a question that you get quite often from friends and neighbors or maybe a subject that is near and dear to your heart or we can do something like a plant or tree of the month and share some great information on that. If you are interested, email me at kimberly.mayer@ag.tamu.edu.

Here's the Dirt

Community Outreach Needs



**JMG Lesson at Harvest for the Hungry -
January 6th from 9am-11am**



Triple T - Backyard Citrus

January 27th from 9am-11am

AgriLife Auditorium

In need of 2-4 volunteers to man a BCMGA table as well as help with Citrus tastings and refreshments.



***Please reach out to Preston or Ellen Armistead to sign up or for more details.**

Here's the Dirt



Texas A&M AgriLife
Extension Service
21017 County Road 171
Angleton, TX 77515
979-864-1558

<https://brazoria.agrilife.org/horticulture/>

Follow us on Facebook

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

**Brazoria County Horticulture - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Service**