

# Here's the Dirt

## KIMBERLY MAYER, CEA - HORTICULTURE

Brazoria County

TEXAS A&M  
AGRILIFE  
EXTENSION

## April Happenings



Have you seen all the bluebonnets along the roadways lately? It's that time of year! Everyone knows bluebonnets come in colors besides blue, but horticulturists were shocked to receive reports of a multi-colored variety found growing in the Hill Country. Experts from Aggie Horticulture verified the wildflower is indeed a variety that has never been seen before and named it the "Rainbow bluebonnet." Amazingly, its petals transition their colors the way the gradient in a rainbow does. Experts are unsure if this mutation occurred naturally or was created by someone, but nevertheless, we now have a new color of wildflower to look out for. Got ya! This is an April Fool's joke. But while there is no rainbow version, bluebonnets do come in different varieties. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension horticulturists worked with seed producers, growers, and farmers to domesticate the bluebonnet.

In 1982, Texas naturalist Carroll Abbott, or "Mr. Texas Bluebonnet", came up with the idea to create the Texas flag out of bluebonnets for the 1986 Texas Sesquicentennial. His proposal has grown to involve thousands of people, created a multi-million-dollar agricultural industry and generated unthinkable publicity for Texas A&M.

Some pretty incredible bluebonnet breakthroughs because of these efforts include transplants, rapidly germinating, chemically scarified seed, and early-blooming plant types. These were needed to create the state flag with different colored bluebonnets.

A bluebonnet is called a "bluebonnet" no matter the color. If a bluebonnet is white, it's simply a white bluebonnet, not a whitebonnet. Not-so-bluebonnets have always existed in nature. To proliferate different colored bluebonnets, botanists across the state set out to find seeds from white and pink bluebonnets. By collecting seeds from only these colors, natural selection was sped up. The different colors of bluebonnets are: blue, of course, white, pink, maroon, red, and lavender.

Due to the efforts of many people, one day Texans may think of a lot of different colored flowers when they hear the word "bluebonnets."

## What's Growing On...

April 4th - Intern Field Trip at H4H  
Meet at BEES at 9am - open to all MG.

April 6th- JMG Lesson at H4H 9:30am

April 6th- Nature Day at the Lake Jackson Sea Center 10am to 3pm

April Board Meeting  
04/09/2024 9am @BEES

April General Meeting  
04/12/24 @AgriLife Office 10 am  
Educational Speaker (Pecans)  
11 am Business Meeting

April 13th - Open Garden Days at BEES and Lawn Care Tips in the Education Building

April 17th - Volunteer Luncheon  
@AgriLife Office

April 20th -JMG Lesson at H4H  
Starbucks Day and Insects

April 22nd-24th - Texas Master Gardener Conference Online

April 26th - Tree Planting 101 @BEES

# Here's the Dirt

## April Horticulture Hero: JoAnne Knodel

She's our president, she's our leader, and she's been the nominator of many of our Horticulture Heroes over the past year and a half. And now it's her turn to be recognized.

I think you'll agree with me that JoAnne Knodel can do it all. And it's no wonder that she makes such a phenomenal Master Gardener President. She's organized, diplomatic and has the leadership skills and the experience to run a non-profit organization like no one else.

JoAnne is the one that we go to for input, wisdom and ideas. She has the patience to tackle big and small projects. She knows technology like no one's business and she shares her knowledge of Texas Superstars like a pro! If you need an outreach event staffed, a spreadsheet created, a website updated or the name of a perennial that grows in full sun, JoAnne has the answer for you. Whether you have chatted with her by text, email or in person, JoAnne makes sure your question or request is taken care of.

Now, she and I may tease each other about turfgrass and whether it needs to be appreciated and placed on a pedestal where it belongs or it needs to be ripped out of every lawn in Texas and have pollinator friendly flowers planted in it's stead, at the end of the day, I know she would stand behind me and support the educational outreach of any horticultural event that we want to share. Please help me congratulate, JoAnne Knodel as your April Horticulture Hero of the Month!



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## 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](mailto:kimberly.mayer@ag.tamu.edu)





# Here's the Dirt

## Upcoming Continuing Education Opportunities

KEEP PEARLAND BEAUTIFUL  
**Garden Lectures Series**  
 • LIVE  
**Entomology:  
 Pests & Beneficials**  
 April 11th @ 7 PM  
 LIVE on Facebook  
 @keeppearlandbeautiful  
 TEXAS MASTER GARDENER TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION  
 KEEP PEARLAND BEAUTIFUL

GREEN WITH ENVY  
**Lawn Care Tips**  
 Kimberly Mayer, CEA Horticulture  
**FREE**  
 April 13th, 2024  
 10am to 11 am  
 BEES-Demonstration Gardens  
 583 Hospital Drive  
 Angleton, Tx  
 Join our Horticulture Agent, Kimberly Mayer who is a Certified Turfgrass Management Professional as she teaches you the basics of lawn care.  
 Register here:  
<https://brazoria.agrilife.org/events/>  
 TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION  
 TEXAS MASTER GARDENER TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION Brazoria County

**Tree Planting 101**  
 April 26th, 2024  
 10am-12pm  
 Brazoria Environmental Education Station  
 583 Hospital Drive  
 Angleton, Tx 77515  
 Come and join us for Tree Planting 101, where we'll teach you the basics of planting trees and making a positive impact on our environment!  
 Tree giveaway pending.\*  
 Register here:  
<https://brazoria.agrilife.org/events/>  
 TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION BRAZORIA COUNTY  
 TEXAS MASTER GARDENER TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION



# Here's the Dirt

## March Outreach Volunteers



Thank You

TO EVERYONE WHO SHOPPED AND SUPPORTED OUR 2024 PLANT SALE

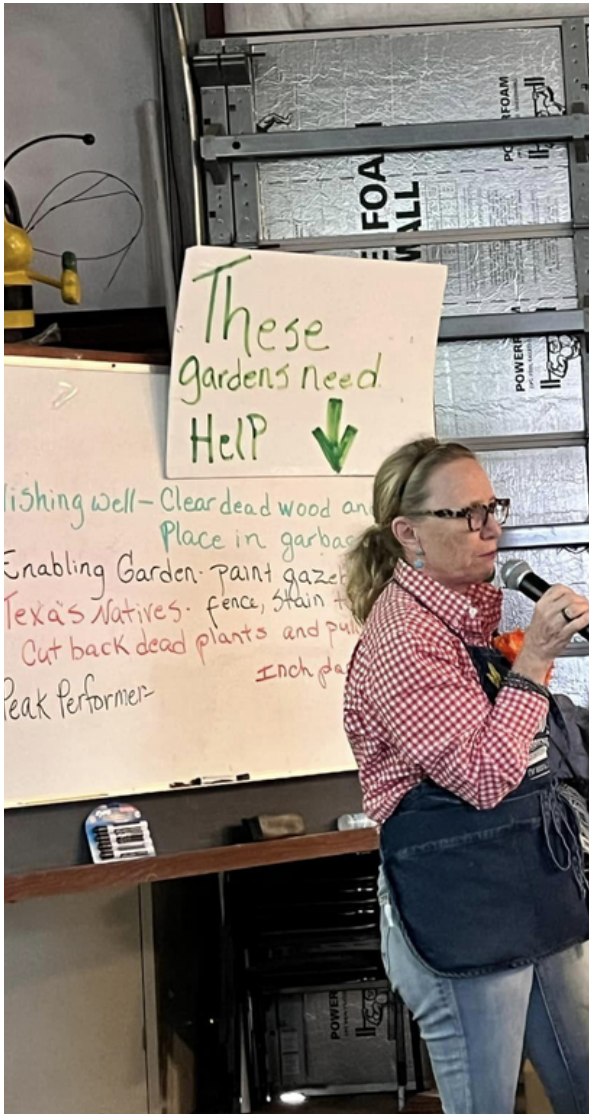


**HUGE SHOUTOUT** to all of you who helped with the First and Second Chance Plant Sale. We could not have pulled it off without you!



# Here's the Dirt

## March Outreach Volunteers



Thank you to members who volunteered to lead or assist at the 2024 Intern Class.

Members shown: Cynthia Finney, Loretta Allen, Linda Ulmer, Cindy Ducros  
Not pictured: Kimberly Mayer, Rose Wagner Joy Hargett, and Ann Hughes.



# Here's the Dirt

## March Outreach Volunteers



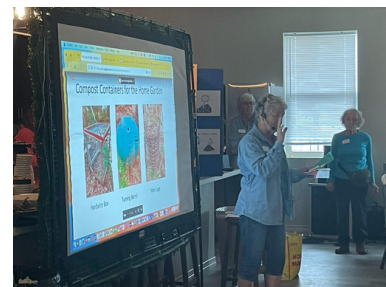
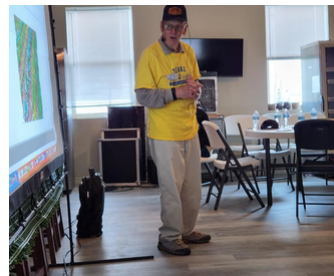
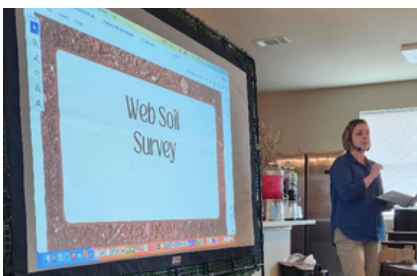
*Organization Spotlight of the Month*  
**Brazoria County Master Gardeners**



This month we would like to give a huge thank you to all of the Brazoria County Master Gardeners! This community of green-thumbed & amazing people come out every other Saturday to teach our children a fun lesson in gardening. They don't only guide our youth, they also lend a helping hand to the farm when needed. The master gardener community is enthusiastic, passionate, and always willing to serve as a valuable resource. Thank you also, for partnering with us in developing The Beginners Farmers and Ranchers program.



**Thank you to members who volunteered to lead or assist at the March BCMGA outreach events! We got a big shoutout from our partner Harvest for the Hungry.**





# Here's the Dirt

## March Outreach Events



The Tomato Basil Bash was a hit thanks to these Master Gardeners! Ruth and August Aimone, Joy Hargett, Sandy Henderson and Carol Butler. Big thanks to all those that came to help set up and take down.

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## Agent's Corner

### Triple T Trees, Turf and Tomatoes

<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Trees</b></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span>January 27th</span><span><b>\$15</b></span></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;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Turf</b></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span>July 11th</span><span><b>\$15</b></span></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;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Tomatoes</b></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span>March 16th</span><span><b>\$25</b></span></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;"> </div>
<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Trees</b></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span>April 26th</span><span><b>FREE!</b></span></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;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Turf</b></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span>April 13th</span><span><b>FREE!</b></span></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;"> </div>	<div style="background-color: #4CAF50; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Tomatoes</b></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><span>June 8th</span><span><b>\$25</b></span></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;"> </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!



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## Agent's Corner



MARCH 20, 2024 | 10 - 11:30 AM CENTRAL  
FREE webinar with great door prizes!



### COOKING UP NATIVES

- Goldenrod Infused Pasta
- Rubus Salsa
- Leafy Greens
- Nopalitos & Chili Pequins
- Pellitory Pasta



To register for this virtual event: scan QR code above or visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CookingNatives>

For more information:  
Megan.Clayton@ag.tamu.edu, Tim.Siegmund@tpwd.texas.gov, Charles.Kneuper@usda.gov



The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

If you missed the Plant Party last week, the following pages have some recipes that were shared by the presenters. Plant Party is a quarterly advanced plant training webinar training provided by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service. This does qualify as CE hours.



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## Agent's Corner

### GOLDENROD-INFUSED PASTA

MARK "MERRIWETHER"  
VORDERBRUGGEN, PH.D.

#### RECIPE:

**FORAGED PLANT:**

1/2 CUP FRESH GOLDENROD LEAVES

**OTHER INGREDIENTS:**

2 EGGS  
2 CUPS ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR  
1/2 TEASPOON SALT  
1/4 CUP WATER

**EQUIPMENT:**

MEASURING CUPS & SPOONS  
STRAINER (METAL)  
ROLLING PIN  
2QT BOWL  
RUBBER SCRAPER  
SHARP KNIFE OR PASTA MAKING MACHINE

**RECIPE:**

1. BLANCH FRESHLY FORAGED GOLDENROD LEAVES BY DIPPING IN BOIL WATER FOR 30-45 SECONDS, COOLING IN ICE WATER, THEN DRAINING, PAT DRY, AND FINELY CHOP.
2. IN A SEPARATE BOWL, WELL MIX THE 2 CUPS OF FLOUR AND 1/2 TEASPOON OF SALT.
3. ADD THE CHOPPED GOLDENROD TO FLOUR/SALT AND MIX.
4. MAKE A DEPRESSION IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOUR/SALT AND DROP IN THE EGGS. FOLD FLOUR INTO THE EGGS UNTIL CRUMBLY.
5. ADD THE WATER WHILE STIRRING.
6. STIR UNTIL A STICKY BALL OF DOUGH HAS FORMED. PLACE THE BALL ON A FLOURED, FLAT SURFACE. KNEAD FIVE MINUTES THEN LET REST, COVERED WITH A PAPER OR CLOTH TOWEL FOR 10 MINUTES.
7. ROLL OUT DOUGH ON A FLOURED SURFACE DOWN TO UNDER 1/8" THICK. SLICE FLATTENED DOUGH INTO THIN OR LASAGNA-STYLE NOODLES WITH A SHARP KNIFE. RAVIOLI CAN ALSO BE MADE.
8. CAREFULLY HANG NOODLES FROM A RACK TO DRY OR FOLD NOODLES INTO LOOSE BUNDLES AND SET ON A MESH SCREEN OR PARCHMENT PAPER.
9. WHEN READY TO COOK, BRING SALTED WATER TO A BOIL AND DROP IN THE NOODLES. BOIL UNTIL THEY REACH THE DESIRED TENDERNESS. REMOVE FROM WATER THEN MIX WITH BUTTER OR SAUCE OF YOUR CHOICE.

UNUSED DOUGH CAN BE FROZEN FOR 6 MONTHS BEFORE USING.  
DRIED NOODLES CAN BE STORED IN AN AIRTIGHT CONTAINER FOR 6 WEEKS.



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## Agent's Corner

### RUBUS SALSA HEIDI KRYGER

#### RECIPE:

IF YOU'VE GOT MORE BERRIES THAN YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH ARE WILLING TO "COOK OUTSIDE THE BOX", HERE IS A SWEET AND SPICY BLACKBERRY SALSA RECIPE ADAPTED FROM MICHAEL MCLAUGHLIN'S SOUTHWESTERN GRILL COOKBOOK:

2 POBLANO PEPPERS  
6 TBS FRESH ORANGE JUICE  
1 CUP MASHED BLACKBERRIES OR DEWBERRIES  
2/3 CUP CHOPPED ONION  
1/4 CUP FRESH LIME JUICE  
1 FRESH HABANERO  
3/4 TSP SALT  
FRESH CILANTRO AND/OR MINT TO TASTE

YOU CAN ROAST THE ONION PRIOR TO CHOPPING, ALTHOUGH THERE WILL BE NO BLACKENED SKIN TO REMOVE. ON A GRILL OR IN A BROILER, ROAST THE POBLANOS UNTIL THE SKINS HAVE JUST TURNED BLACK ON ALL SIDES. PUT THEM IN A PAPER BAG TO STEAM, AND AFTER THEY HAVE COOLED, PEEL THE BLACKENED SKINS OFF. REMOVE THE STEMS FROM THE PEPPERS.

PUT ALL INGREDIENTS IN A BLENDER OR FOOD PROCESSOR AND ROUGHLY CHOP. IT'S GOOD RIGHT OUT OF THE BLENDER, BUT IT'S EVEN BETTER IF YOU LET IT SIT FOR AN HOUR OR TWO. EAT IT WITH CHIPS, OR SLATHER IT ON GRILLED CHICKEN, PORK, OR SHRIMP. ENJOY, Y'ALL!



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## Agent's Corner

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MARK "MERRIWETHER" VORDERBRUGGEN, PH.D.



**RECOMMENDED EDIBLE PLANT BOOKS:**

- IDIOT'S GUIDE: FORAGING BY MARK "MERRIWETHER" VORDERBRUGGEN PH.D., 2016
- OUTDOOR ADVENTURE GUIDE FORAGING BY MARK "MERRIWETHER" VORDERBRUGGEN, PH.D., 2022
- SOUTHWEST FORAGING BY JOHN SLATTERY, 2016
- WILD EDIBLE PLANTS OF TEXAS BY CHARLES W. KANE, 2016
- EDIBLE WILD PLANTS BY PETERSON FIELD GUIDES, 1999

**RECOMMENDED MEDICINAL PLANT BOOKS:**

- SOUTHWEST MEDICINAL PLANTS BY JOHN SLATTERY, 2020
- MEDICINAL PLANTS OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST BY CHARLES W. KANE, 2011
- MEDICINAL PLANTS OF THE DESERT AND CANYON WEST BY MICHAEL MOORE

**RECOMMENDED WILD PLANT COOKBOOKS:**

- IDIOT'S GUIDE: FORAGING BY MARK "MERRIWETHER" VORDERBRUGGEN PH.D., 2016
- THE NEW WILDCRAFTED CUISINE BY PASCAL BAUDAR, 2016
- WILDCRAFTED FERMENTATION BY PASCAL BAUDAR, 2020
- THE WILDCRAFTED COCKTAIL BY ELLEN ZACHOS, 2017
- EDIBLE WILD PLANTS: WILD FOODS FROM DIRT TO PLATE BY JOHN KALLAS, PH.D., 2010

**PURCHASE THESE BOOKS FROM MY AMAZON.COM STORE:**

[WWW.AMAZON.COM/SHOP/FORAGINGTEXAS](http://WWW.AMAZON.COM/SHOP/FORAGINGTEXAS)  
NOTE, I EARN ~7% OF THE SALE PRICE IF PURCHASED FROM THIS LINK.

**UPCOMING FORAGING AND WILDCRAFTING CLASSES CAN BE FOUND AT:**

[WWW.MEDICINEMANPLANTCO.COM/PAGES/UPCOMING-CLASSES](http://WWW.MEDICINEMANPLANTCO.COM/PAGES/UPCOMING-CLASSES)

**SOCIAL MEDIA:**

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FORAGINGTEXAS](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FORAGINGTEXAS)  
[WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/MERRIWETHERFORAGER](http://WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/MERRIWETHERFORAGER)  
[WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/DRMERRIWETHER](http://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/USER/DRMERRIWETHER)

[www.foragingtexas.com](http://www.foragingtexas.com)  
[www.medicinemanplantco.com](http://www.medicinemanplantco.com)



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# 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](mailto:kimberly.mayer@ag.tamu.edu).**

# Here's the Dirt

## Community Outreach Needs



**JMG Lesson at Harvest for the Hungry -  
April 6th and April 20th  
from 9:30 am-11am  
Three Sisters planting in the Children's  
Garden and an Insect lesson.**

**Starbuck's Saturday and an Insect lesson.**

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

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21017 County Road 171  
Angleton, TX 77515  
979-864-1558

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

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

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