

Here's the Dirt

KIMBERLY MAYER, CEA - HORTICULTURE

Brazoria County

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

October Happenings



The highly anticipated Strawberry Jamboree was a complete success and I am so grateful to all of you that came to help out. This was truly a team effort and we couldn't have done it without you. I am already making plans for next year's event. We had a total of 182 people in attendance and it looks like we'll need a bigger event center for next year. Very exciting!

Onward and upward to the next project, which is planning out the next several months worth of robust educational programming. As soon as I have more details on the upcoming lectures and events, I will be sure to let you know.

I'm thrilled to say that we have **TWO** new contributors to our newsletter. Be sure to check out their articles in this month's edition.

I hope you are staying dry with all this much needed rain. See you in the garden very soon!

What's Growing On...

Work Day at the BC Fairgrounds 10/06/23

October Board Meeting
10/10/23 @BEES 9 am

October General Meeting
10/13/23 @AgriLife 10 am

Keep Pearland Beautiful - FB Live! "Shade Loving Perennials" 10/12/23 7pm

2023 Texas Fruit Conference-
Fredericksburg 10/18/23-10/20/23

Member Tree Sale -
10/21/23 @BEES 9-11 am

Harvest for the Hungry - JMG Class- 10/21/23 9-11

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October Horticulture Hero: Preston Armistead

I would like to nominate Preston Armistead for Horticulture Hero of the Month.

With Preston's hard work and determination, the "Woodys Garden" in the front of BEE'S, has been transformed from what looked like a big patch of poison ivy and an arbor being choked with wisteria. The poison ivy was so bad, not many would dare walk through this area. Few knew that under all the wads of wisteria you would find a rather nice-looking arbor. And even fewer knew that above the poison ivy and under the wisteria covered arbor was a small bench, rusting away.

Preston Armistead is not afraid of a challenge, he stepped up and said, let me help! I am raising my hand and want to be apart of this team. In fact, I want to take on a big part of this project. So, week after week, Preston showed up, pulling weeds, fighting poison ivy and wisteria. Eventually, the team was able to get most of the poison ivy gone and a lot of the wisteria off the arbor. But there sat the lonely, sad looking bench.

Preston took that little bench home. He sandblasted it, painted it, and put new wooden slats on the sad little bench. When Preston brought the bench back, it was no longer a sad little bench. It now sits proudly, under a beautiful arbor. This arbor has had all of the wisteria removed from it, it has been stained and once again, we have a beautiful arbor with a lovely bench, in a very nice garden. I can't wait to see what is next to come.

When Preston is not working so hard at BEES, he is spending time with his wife of 35 years, Ellen. They have 3 children and 3 grandchildren. In speaking with Preston, I learned that he plays the guitar, banjo, mandolin and bass. While helping with a little arbor staining, he told me that he had formed a bluegrass gospel musical group that played in assisted living and nursing homes in their community. Ellen shared with me that they have recently been asked to landscape around the municipal building in their HOA, where Preston is on the Board.

Looks to me like Preston is not only a Horticulture Hero, but may just be a Hero to many!!



NOT ALL
Heroes
WEAR
CAPES

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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 September 30th. Email me : kimberly.mayer@ag.tamu.edu



Here's the Dirt

September Outreach Volunteers



Thank you to members who volunteered to lead or assist at the September BCMGA outreach events!

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September Outreach Volunteers



EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT

Succulents

September 7 10am

Heritage Gardeners
Garden club
112 W Spreading Oaks
Friendswood, TX

Free and open to the public



Cynthia Finney
Brazoria County
Master Gardener

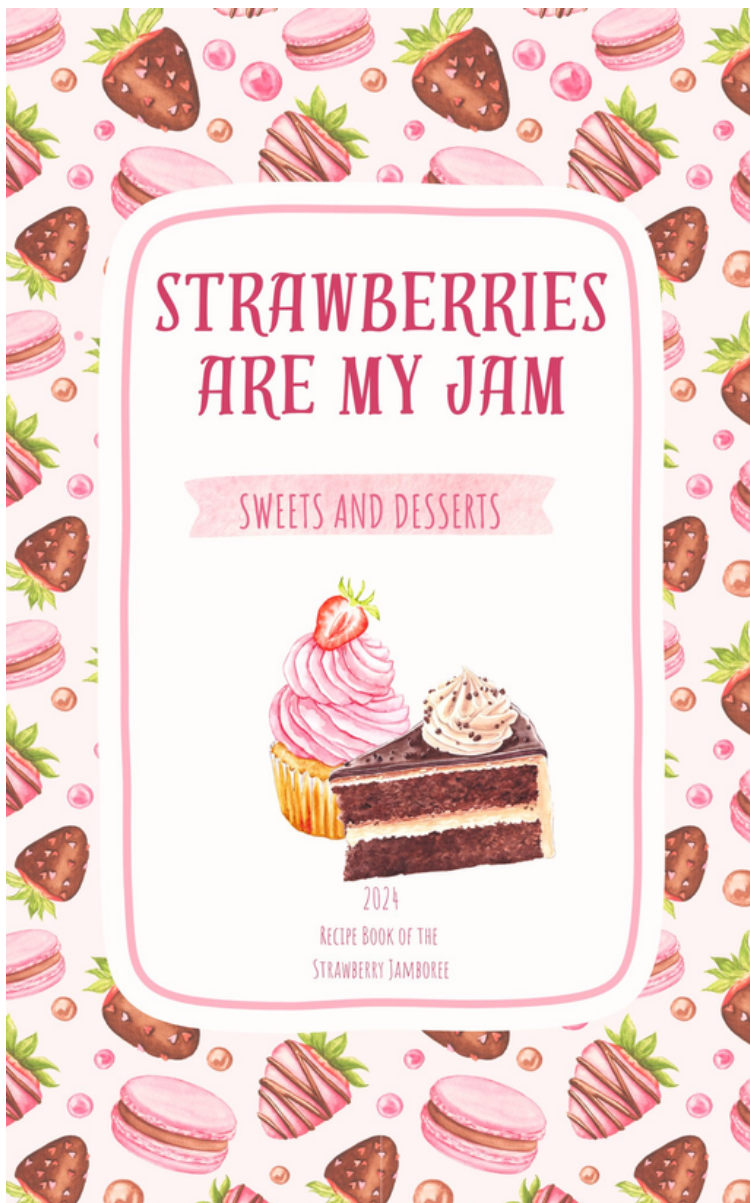


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Agent's Corner



The Strawberry Jamboree was a berry sweet event and I am thrilled with the turnout. I think all of the attendees enjoyed the program. To follow up with participants, we will be accepting strawberry dessert recipes for a cookbook.

Deadline is December 22nd and we will be selling these at next year's Jamboree. We'd love to have you submit your favorite strawberry recipes.

Email them to me at:
kimberly.mayer@ag.tamu.edu



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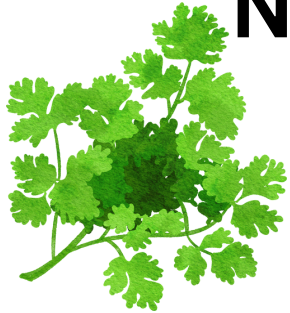
Agent's Corner

A vibrant yellow flyer for a gardening event. At the top left, a white banner with red text reads "Harvest Children's Gardening Club". Below it, the text "JUNIOR MASTER GARDENERS" is written in bold black letters. To the right, a wooden sign graphic says "All Welcome!". The event details are listed: "Saturday October 7 9:30 AM Harvest for the Hungry Education Center 184 CR 792 Freeport, TX". There are two logos: "TEXAS MASTER GARDENER" and "Harvest for the Hungry, Inc.". The bottom of the flyer is decorated with colorful illustrations of autumn leaves and flowers.

Join us this Saturday for another Junior Master Gardener lesson with a great group of kids.

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Notes from the Herb Garden



Parsley

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



From time to time, we hope to bring our fellow gardeners some useful information regarding Herbs. Herbs can be grown in all seasons in southeast Texas; however, success can certainly be achieved if grown at the best time for the particular plant. This and future articles will give some information as presented from Texas A&M, The Herb Society, plus personal experience in Brazoria County.

As fall is nearing (at least we hope it is, after a very hot and dry summer), one herb to consider growing during the fall is Parsley. No doubt, most of us have had parsley potatoes or perhaps a piece of ruffled parsley on a restaurant plate as a garnish. While its taste might be a challenge, parsley is quite nutritious.

Parsley loves cooler weather and in fact, many specimens survived both Winter Storm Uri in February 2021 as well as Winter Storm Elliott in December 2022. There could be some foliage die back in difficult conditions, however survival is achievable. One option that worked well in Manvel was a covering of leaves over the entire plant, then sheet or light blanket to keep the leaves in place. If the foliage dies back by chance, just give it time and water and it will produce more foliage.

There are various varieties of parsley and those that have done well in Brazoria County include Italian Flat Leaf Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum neapolitanum*), and Curly Leaf Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*). From the names, you should be able to gather that one has flat leaves and one has curly leaves. While it's a matter of taste, many find the flat leaf varieties more flavorful and used in cooking while the curly leaf varieties may be bitter or with little taste. Again, it is nutritious if you can get past the taste and of course, taste is always a matter of opinion!

Parsley is easily germinated from seeds and often, you may get another plant in a year or two from reseeding. It's a generally small plant that gets about 10-12 inches tall and about that wide. At Brazoria County Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden, which we call BEES, we grow our herbs in highly composted soil. Many herbs can be grown in gardens, flower beds or anywhere that has decent drainage. Like most herbs, parsley does not need fertilizer but it will not hurt to use it. We never use fertilizer in the Herb Garden at BEES and have really good success. Parsley can also be used in bouquets as fillers in between other more outstanding flowers.

Parsley leaves, fresh or dried, can be used in potatoes, rice or various meats or soups. Dried parsley leaves store well. The stems are flavorful and might be used for soup stock.

If you are interested in growing parsley from seed, you can plant soon and expect the plants will last until spring or until when it gets really warms. Morning sun with afternoon shade protection will work but, in the summer, it needs sun protection. It could continue growing in the shade throughout the year but tends to die off in the hot summer. It can grow indoors, as well, with good light or a grow light system.

Transplants do great as well and give you ahead start over growing from seeds. Be sure not to mix up Parsley with Cilantro, another cool weather plant. They look alike but taste and smell very differently. Cilantro is a great fall and winter plant and will be the subject of the next article.

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Destinations

By: Mark Mckee

Brazoria County Master Gardener

Like many of you I'm sure, my yard is my happy place. A wonderful day for me is spent working outside, whether it's mowing, gardening or building something. The feeling of accomplishment at the end of the day when I come inside bone-tired but knowing my yard looks better than it did is one of my favorite feelings.

But on occasion a break is required. A visit to a special nursery, a park, an arboretum, or even a special supplier that fills a special gardening need can help restore us physically and creatively. Teri and I really enjoy short trips to visit garden related destinations. What is a destination? To me, it is more than just an errand. It may require a little planning and possibly include friends. Food may be involved. (May? Who am I kidding? Food will definitely be involved!) It may be an afternoon drive to the other side of town. Or a day trip to someplace a little further out. Or possibly a weekend getaway to someplace special that is worth the extra effort. And when you return home, you feel relaxed and refreshed, with new motivation and ideas for your garden and yard. That is what this space is going to be about. Places worth a visit. Destinations. And if we are aware of an upcoming event that might be a worthy destination, we will include that as well.

I have a cousin that loves to buy craft supplies, not because she has a project in mind, but because she loves craft supplies. I know of other people who have a love for tools, or tech, and sometimes they over-indulge in these purchases. If you have a similar issue related to plants and garden items, you might want to be careful if you decide to visit this month's destination!

Enchanted Gardens Nursery in Richmond, Texas is a destination. Teri and I have visited there on several occasions, and I don't believe we have seen the entire place yet. The initial impression is a little overwhelming as there are tables of plants in all directions. As you look around you will see large signs where you can find trees, roses, shade plants, annuals, herbs, and perennials. There is even a section for Texas Native plants. They also stock Texas Superstars and Earth-Kind roses. A real plus is that Enchanted Gardens grows many of their own herbs, annuals and perennials nearby, so you can count on these being fresh, healthy and in-stock. Enchanted Gardens also carries a wide variety of soils, fertilizers and amendments for you to choose from. If you need help at any point, you will find plenty of friendly and knowledgeable staff on hand to answer your questions or point you in the right direction.

And the plants are just the beginning of the show! As you wander through the grounds, you will find large areas dedicated to pots and containers, indoor plants, artistic holders for container plants and all kinds of statuary and objects for decorating your garden. And be on the lookout for seasonally decorated areas that make for great photo opportunities. On our recent visit, pumpkins of all sizes, from tiny to jack-o-lantern worthy were everywhere! They even had pumpkin spice compost! (That was their joke, but I liked it so much I had to include it.) The gift shop also shouldn't be missed, especially if you have ever considered making a fairy garden. And if at any point you should feel the need for a little pick-me-up, there are two vendors selling coffee beverages and sno-cones to provide a break and additional energy.

Enchanted Gardens is family owned and operated and is a valued member of the Richmond community, offering evening events and classes. Plans are to offer classes in January to help gardeners get a jump on planting their spring gardens and refreshing their landscaping. Enchanted Gardens also belongs to the Milkweed Movement, promoting and encouraging gardeners to plant native milkweed to support the migratory Monarch butterflies.

So if you find yourself in need of a destination, set aside a few hours to visit Enchanted Gardens Nursery. It is worth the drive!

(If you decide to give Enchanted Gardens a visit, try to time it so that you can have lunch in Richmond as well. A place not to be missed is Sandy McGee's Restaurant. You'll thank me later!)

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By: Mark Mckee
Brazoria County Master Gardener

(Please note: AgriLife Extension does not endorse these companies.)

Enchanted Gardens Nursery
6420 FM 359
Richmond, Tx 77406
enchantedgardensrichmond.com

Sandy McGee's Restaurant
314 Morton St.
Richmond, TX 77469
sandymcgees.com

UPCOMING DESTINATION EVENTS:
The Antique Rose Emporium Festival of Roses
November 3 – 5
Antiqueroseemporium.com

Dallas Arboretum
"Autumn at the Arboretum – "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown!"
September 16 – November 5
Dallasarboretum.org

(If you have a suggestion for a destination, or would like to contribute a DESTINATIONS story, please let Kimberly Mayer or I know.)



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Brazoria County Master Gardener



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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.

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Community Outreach Needs



* Oct. 6th - Volunteers for Clean-up & planting with Don Sabathier

* Oct. 24th - Hood Case Elem. Alvin ISD

Speaker for K-2

Volunteer for K-2

Speaker for 3-5

Volunteer for 3-5

*Please reach out to Susan Wood to sign up or for more details.

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

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

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