

# TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION



Here's the Dirt Newsletter

VOL. 3 Edition 5

## Brazoria County Horticulture Agent



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*Kimberly Mayer, CEA, CPTM*

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## *June Happenings*

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*It's hard to believe, but the month of June is now upon us. The holiday season came and went, stock show season came and went, and the school year is over. It won't be long before warm weather is here to stay for a few months and while most of the country turn their thoughts to summertime activities like graduations, vacations, and pool time, County Agents turn their attention to Program Planning, State 4-H Roundup, Validations, Professional Development, State Faculty Meeting, County and Professional Association State meetings.*

*Being a County Agent is much more than a job, it's a lifestyle. Extension work goes from season to season, and as we move into this summer season, I would remind you to make sure to take some time to spend with your family and loved ones. You won't regret it.*

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## June Horticulture Hero



1 - Horticulture Hero of the Month! Master Gardener and BCMGA Treasurer, Tracy Ning

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*Tracy Ning currently serves as the Treasurer of the BCMGA. She does a fantastic job keeping our group fiscally responsible and on target with our budget. She also recently served as the co-chair of the Tree Sale, which itself is like a second full time job!*

*But, when Tracy shows up at BEES, she is ready to help in any garden or helping anyone requesting assistance. She never minds pulling weeds or putting out mulch. She personally worked several days in the Herb Garden as well as the Rose Garden.*

*Tracy is very quick when answering emails or texts and has a lot of great knowledge about growing vegetables. Lastly, she is a really good cook - just ask her about her roasted okra!*

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## Nominate a Horticulture Hero

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*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)*

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## Upcoming Educational Opportunities

June 13th- Keep Pearland Beautiful Facebook Live- Pollinators w/Don Bushman

June 15th- Harvest for the Hungry - Beginner Farmer Rancher Program - 2nd Cohort

## May Outreach Volunteers

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*During the month of May, we had a Junior Master Gardener lesson, an Open Garden Day and Linda Ulmer made a great presentation at the Warrior's Refuge. Big thanks to all of those volunteers who gave of their time to educate the public on horticultural topics like insects, making fairy gardens and composting.*

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2 - Linda Ulmer at Warrior's Refuge



*3 - Using our Bug Suckers at Harvest for the Hungry*



*4 - Open Garden Days- Making Fairy Gardens*



5 - Open Garden Days- Making Fairy Gardens

## Agent's Corner



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*Are you seeing large webs in your pecan, oak, hickory and sweet gums trees? You are not alone. These are Fall Webworms. While infestations are rarely fatal to the tree, it can make them more susceptible to pests and disease. Here are some control measures that you can take:*

*Fall webworms can be managed on smaller trees without insecticides. You can do this by physically removing the webs, caterpillars, or egg masses. You can knock larvae out of low-hanging webs into a box or garbage bag with a stick or broom. You can also prune webs from lower and smaller branches, or pull them down with a rake or a pole. Beneficial insects attack the eggs and larvae of the fall webworm and keep populations under control in many years. You can help beneficial insects by tearing open the protective webs. If webs are too numerous or too high in a tree to deal with individually, you can use insecticides to prevent damage. Hose-end or commercial high-pressure sprayers are best for reaching upper parts of trees. Webworm larvae stay inside their web so insecticide sprays must penetrate the web to be most effective. For best control, apply insecticides when webs and caterpillars are small. Insecticides containing *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) or spinosad are effective and will not harm beneficial insects. Carbaryl and pyrethroid insecticides (such as permethrin, cyfluthrin, bifenthrin, and esfenvalerate) are highly effective against fall webworm. However, these insecticides are also toxic to beneficial insects so use them only for severe infestations. Insecticidal soaps and horticultural oil sprays can also be effective when applied directly to caterpillars in their nests. Insecticide labels are subject to change—always read and follow instructions on the pesticide label carefully. You are responsible for the effects of pesticides on your own property, as well as problems caused by drift to other properties. Not all insecticides are registered for fall webworms on all sites and commodities. Read the label to make sure the insecticide is labeled for your site and commodity. For more information check out AgriLife Learn for a free publication on Fall webworms: <https://cdn-de.agrilife.org/.../files/fall-webworm.pdf>*

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## **Garden Destinations by: Mark McKee**

Jefferson, Texas is one of our absolute favorite destinations. We have been there so many times over the years that each arrival kind of feels like a homecoming! On our first visit, our oldest son was 3 or 4 years old. He is 37 now. That tells you how much we love returning to this small East Texas town!

Located 20 minutes northeast of Marshall, TX, Jefferson could be just one more small, undistinguished town on Highway 59. Due to some fortunate circumstances, and the dedication of the Jessie Allen Wise Garden Club, Jefferson has a lot to offer its visitors.

Founded in 1845, Jefferson was a major riverboat port, shipping goods from the surrounding area down the Red River to Shreveport. Many beautiful buildings and homes were built during Jefferson's heyday as fortunes were made in this thriving community. Cutting a long story short, the coming of the railroad, which bypassed Jefferson, crippled the economy, and almost turned Jefferson into a ghost town.

These days Jefferson survives primarily on the tourism industry and offers visitors a look at restored homes, most dating back before the Civil War, and the oldest continuously operating hotel in Texas, The Excelsior House, which has hosted many historical figures over the years.



Although Jefferson hosts numerous events throughout the year, the two major events are put on by the Jessie Allen Wise Garden Club. These ladies organize and host the Christmas Candlelight Tour (the first two weekends in December), which features 4 of the beautifully restored homes decorated for Christmas, and the Jefferson Pilgrimage (the first weekend in May), which also features tours of four homes, but includes tours of four local gardens. The homes and the gardens on the tours change each year, so every visit offers the opportunity to see different homes and gardens.

Teri and I were able to go to the Pilgrimage this year, along with friends Preston & Ellen Armistead. We stayed in "La Belle Maison", a restored home that we rented through VRBO. There are many homes like this available to stay in, as well as many B&B's. We have heard Jefferson referred to as the B&B Capital of Texas.

This year the homes were amazing and included the restored Schluter home, its first time on a Jefferson tour. The gardens were amazing as well and ranged from the residential garden of a mayoral candidate (she won the election the next day, by the way!), a formal garden behind one of the oldest houses in Jefferson and a whimsical pink garden at the home of a former Tyler Junior College Apache Belle.

In addition to the homes and gardens to be toured, Jefferson offers many unique shops to visit, a museum, and a play that tells the story of "Diamond Bessie", a true tale of the scandalous murder of a young woman and the trial of her well-connected gentleman (?) friend. There are also numerous restaurants to choose from and a "General Store" where you can not only buy unique gift items and souvenirs, but candy that only people of a certain age remember (Bit-O-Honey, anyone?)

I hope you can visit Jefferson during either the Pilgrimage or the Candlelight Tour and enjoy the history, the lovely homes, and the friendly people that make it all happen! You can check out the details and dates at [www.historicjeffersonfoundation.com](http://www.historicjeffersonfoundation.com).







## Community Outreach Needs

### Upcoming Events:

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*June 1- JMG lesson at Harvest for the Hungry*

*June 5th- Tomato Cage Giveaway at AgriLife Office*

*June 8th- Open Garden Days- @BEES from 10am-12pm*

*June 11th- Board Meeting - @BEES from 9-10am*

*June 14th - General Meeting @AgriLife 10am-12pm*

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