

Speaker Bios

Malathy Chandrasekhar

Malathy Chandrasekhar is a health and clean food enthusiast, a certified Extension Master Gardener and Wellness Volunteer, certified yoga instructor, life coach, planet lover, world traveler, recipe developer, home remedy believer. She has a background in Information Technology and after having worked in the corporate world for over two decades, she now spends her time hiking, visiting remote locations around the world, teaching, and practicing yoga, and helping numerous DFW first-time gardeners grow something edible in their yards. She runs a health and wellness blog called Healthy Indian and believes in the joys of pure, unadulterated, and simple living and eating.

Carol Clark

Carol Clark is a Texas Master Naturalist, long-time Native Plant Society of Texas member, Chair of the Bring Back the Monarchs to Texas committee of NPSOT, and a Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist. She is a frequent speaker on native plant and insect topics throughout Texas and has won both the President's Award and the Benny J Simpson Fellows Award from the Native Plant Society of Texas. She works with the National Wildlife Federation on their Monarch Stewards certification program and has contributed to projects with USDA, Xerces, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and university researchers. She loves visiting plants in their natural habitats and photographing them.

Michelle Connally

Michelle Connally is a certified Extension Master Gardener in Collin County, Texas, graduating from the 2014 class. She was awarded the Intern of the Year for leading the Vegetable and Potager Garden volunteer workdays. Michelle has contributed seasonal vegetable and potager garden updates to the Garden Wise Gazette and continued her volunteer service in the Vegetable and Potager garden. In 2018 and 2019, Michelle co-lead with Kathleen LaSapio the Garden Show Propagation Booth, managing the children's activity; in 2020 with fellow EMG Jeri Wise, the team began planning for the 2020 booth. Once the pandemic shut down the event, the team pivoted and made several Propagation-related videos for the chapter's YouTube Channel. In 2020, Michelle began presenting on the topic of Sexual Propagation for the annual Collin County Master Garden Class. Michelle is dedicated to helping others learn about propagation and vegetable gardening.

Beth DiGioia

Beth DiGioia has been an Extension Master Gardener since 2002 and received a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017. She holds Specialist Designations in propagation and vegetable gardening. She has been a member at large of The Herb Society of America since 2005. In 2007 Beth graduated with a degree in Ornamental Horticulture & Landscape Management, and a Certified Landscape Gardener designation. Upon graduation she started a business as a Landscape Designer and Garden Coach and enjoys helping people create beautiful gardens. Beth is a co-founder (with fellow EMG Mary Nell Jackson) of The Herb Guild and has authored articles for *The Art of Living Beautifully*, *Fairview Estate Living* and *Lucas Estate Living*. She has spoken on the topic of herbs and other garden related subjects throughout the Metroplex and co-leads the CCMGA student training in the subjects of herbs and propagation. Beth recently moved from a large property to a standard lot in McKinney and is happily acclimating.

Gayle Engels

Gayle Engels is the Special Projects Director for the American Botanical Council (ABC) where she has worked since 1995. She oversees and guides the development of ABC's website and content management system (CMS). Gayle directs ABC's HerbMedPro database, coordinates HerbDay nationally, writes content for ABC's website, including its free ecards, Healthy Ingredients profiles, and Adopt-an-Herb pages. Gayle wrote more than 50 Herb Profiles for HerbalGram over 13 years and currently edits and formats Botanical Adulterants Prevention Program articles for publication on ABC's website. Gayle has a degree in secondary education and manages the Education

Department and the 25+ themed gardens on ABC's 2.5-acre Case Mill homestead. Gayle gives presentations for educational groups and plant-oriented organizations, including demonstrations, study groups, lectures, and tours of ABC's gardens. She is the Botany and Horticulture chair for the Herb Society of America and is thrilled to have received its inaugural Madalene Hill Award for Excellence in Herbal Education.

Eddie Fife

Born and raised in Rhode Island, Edie moved to Texas in 1979. The climate and soil are vastly different in North Texas from New England. After many years of unsuccessful gardening, i.e., killing plants, she became a Collin County Extension Master Gardener (2015) to learn more about Texas soil, climate, and plants that survive here. And her plant casualties decreased as her landscape improved! Because she loves to cook and entertain friends, Edie's favorite things to grow are culinary herbs, as well as vegetables; she also enjoys perennials. Edie has served CCMGA as a project lead (Technology and Adopt-a-Road), Advocate, Vice President, and President. She currently chairs the nominating committee, hosts many Zoom meetings for CCMGA, is a member of the Presentation Review Committee, and has been a mentor to Extension Master Gardener Training classes in 2021, 2022, and 2023. Edie is also an Advanced Master Gardener – Tree Care and a member of The Herb Society of America. She enjoys volunteering in the CCMGA Ask the Master Gardener booth at local home & garden shows to answer homeowners' landscape questions.

Mary Nell Jackson

Mary Nell Jackson is a founding member of Collin County Master Gardeners Association; she has been an Extension Master Gardener for 26 years. Mary Nell received a Lifetime Achievement award in 2015 from CCMGA. She is a member of The Herb Society of America, received her Rosemary Pin for 25 years of service, and in 2009 received a Certificate of Achievement for distinction in horticulture and herbs. She has authored numerous articles for HSA and CCMGA and was published in The Herb Society of America's national publication, *The Herbarist*. She co-founded the Herb Guild along with fellow MG Beth DiGioia to explore the world of herbs; she and Beth also co-teach herb training at the annual CCMGA student class. Mary Nell has taught multi-series herbal instruction for the Seniors Active in Learning (SAIL) program at Collin County Community College at the Plano campus. Mary Nell has presented herbal programs to local garden clubs and plant nurseries in the DFW Metroplex, as well as her own Extension Master Gardener Association and Herb Society units in Arkansas and Ohio.

Barney Lipscomb

In addition to the publications program, Barney is one of the authors of Shinnery and Mahler's Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas, Illustrated Flora of East Texas, and Ferns and Lycopytes of Texas. Barney serves on the Board of Consultants for the North Texas Poison Center in Dallas and has research interests in the application of botany to forensic science. As Editor-in-Chief of Journal of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (formerly Sida, Contributions to Botany) as well as the Sida, Botanical Miscellany Series, Barney plays an integral role in disseminating some of the results of the BRIT research staff in our internationally distributed, peer-refereed journals. Barney's personal taxonomic specialty is the family Cyperaceae, and he has carried out fieldwork in various parts of the U.S., Mexico, and Central America. Barney is an active member of the Council of Botanical and Horticultural Libraries (CBHL) and is a member of the Board of Directors for the Flora of North America Association, as well as serving as their Treasurer.

Christine Moore

Chrissy Moore is the curator of the National Herb Garden (NHG) in Washington, DC, and is a member of The Herb Society of America, Potomac Unit. She is also a certified arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture. Chrissy lectures, provides tours, and writes on various herbal topics, as well as shepherds the garden's "Under the Arbor" educational outreach program. She is the co-blogmaster of the HSA Blog. She is the current recipient of the Nancy Putnam Howard

Award for Excellence in Horticulture from The Herb Society of America and past recipient of the Elizabeth Crisp Rea Award for public garden preservation.

Maryann Readal

Maryann Readal is a 15-year Walker County Master Gardener. She has been a member of The Herb Society of America's Board of Directors for more than 6 years and is a founding member of The Society's Texas Thyme Unit in Huntsville, TX which was started in 2009. Maryann authors a monthly article about herbs for The Herb Society's blog and various other publications. She is the editor of The Society's quarterly HSA News and the annual journal, *The Herbarist*. Maryann is also a Certified Native Landscape Specialist with the Texas Native Plant Society. She lectures on herbs and plants and does the herb training for three Extension Master Gardener Intern programs. Maryann retired as a college library director and now gardens among the pines in the Piney Woods of East Texas. She enjoys sharing her knowledge and interest in herbs and creating kaleidoscopic gardens of colors, shapes, and fragrances that people and pollinators enjoy visiting.

Tiana Rehman

Tiana Rehman (née Franklin) joined the BRIT staff in 2003 as Herbarium Collections Assistant, having previously volunteered with the BRIT Andes to Amazon Biodiversity Program. Tiana was the Collections Manager of the BRIT herbarium beginning 2009 for over 12 years. She became the Director of the Herbarium in 2022, and as such facilitates the care, usage and growth of the plant collection housed in the BRIT herbarium, as well as its interpretation for the public. Tiana's interests in collections management include the task of keeping the myriad physical and virtual data elements that contribute to project-based research both current and accessible. Tiana's M.S. in Environmental Science from Texas Christian University was earned while working at BRIT, and her thesis addressed the diversity and small-scale distribution of members of the Myristicaceae (nutmeg family of plants) at the Los Amigos Biological Station in Madre de Dios, Peru. She continues to be an active field botanist and has contributed specimens to local (Texas) and international (Peru, Costa Rica, Jamaica) floristics projects. Additionally, Tiana has interests in photography, microscopy, and biodiversity informatics (e.g., Atrium Biodiversity Information System, Apiary Project, National Science Foundation Thematic Collections Networks).

Andrea Shackelford

Raised in Dallas, Andrea Shackelford graduated from Southern Methodist University in 2007 and built her early career around the farm to table movement. Working with notable chefs Tom Colicchio, Kevin Maxey, Jeff Harris, Tim Bevins, and Graham Dodds, Chef Andrea honed her skills and joined Wells Hospitality Group/DFA in 2012. As Executive Chef, she oversees menu development and culinary decisions for Harvest Seasonal Kitchen, Rick's Chophouse, and Sterling Catering and Events. Andrea is a founding member of McKinney's non-profit organization, The Seed Project Foundation, which highlights the importance of sustainability and funds education and agriculture initiatives that support sustainable farming.

Kyle Francis Stewart

Kyle grew up in a small Iowa town, and Kyle received degrees in music from Iowa State University, Northwestern University and Tanglewood. After stints teaching music, arts and humanities, Kyle and his partner Phil bought a coffee shop. They added tea to the product line and renamed the business The Cultured Cup. Kyle's fascination with world culture and social rituals led him to tea, the world's second most consumed beverage after water. 27 years later, The Cultured Cup is considered one of the best places to buy and learn about tea in the U.S.

Brad Voss

Brad Voss is the County Extension Agent for Horticulture with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Collin County. In this role, he provides research-based information and educational programs to residents, landowners, and horticultural producers in Collin County. He holds a B.S. with honors in Agricultural Sciences and an M.S. in Agricultural Sciences from Texas A&M University – Commerce. His specialties are soil science and fertility, plant nutrition, and integrated pest management. Brad

likes discussing the ins and outs of our Blackland soil and helping folks overcome the challenges they bring. Brad and his wife, Audrey, have two boys.

Mary Wohlleb

Mary Remmel Wohlleb was born and raised in Little Rock, Arkansas. She has studied language, cross cultural communications, religion, psychology, and philosophy along with international business management. She is a member of the Little Rock Garden Club and joined the Arkansas Unit of The Herb Society of American in 1979, sharing her love of herbs with her mother, who was a founding member of the Unit. Mary has served in several leadership roles in the unit; she was soon tapped for a national board position, including National President of HSA from 2000-2002. The far-flung friendships made have been true blessings. Her current garden interests are natives and pollinator plants, as well as herbs and watching birds and other small animals.