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# Trinity Valley Community College & Henderson County Master Gardeners: Partnership Benefits Community

By Pula Winter and David Bickerstaff

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Trinity Valley Community College ("TVCC") owns a commercial sized greenhouse on its Athens campus that was historically used for horticulture curriculum. Over time horticulture was no longer part of the curriculum and due to lack of use, the greenhouse fell in a state of disrepair.

TVCC offered to partner with the Henderson County Master Gardeners Association ("HCMGA") to allow them to use the greenhouse for the benefit of the community. HCMGA gladly accepted the invitation and this began a partnership which has existed since 2015.

Due to the efforts of the HCMGA, the greenhouse is once again a great asset for TVCC and the community. HCMGA uses the greenhouse to grow plants from seed as well as propagating plants. These plants are nurtured by the HCMGA team and then sold in their annual spring plant sale. The proceeds from this sale helps fund various projects which benefit Henderson County residents.

On Tuesday, April 23rd, Dr. Jerry King, President of TVCC, toured the greenhouse and witnessed the transformation that has occurred as a result of the partnership. Dr. King stated, "It is impressive what HCMGA has accomplished with our asset that was in disrepair. We are proud to have a partnership with HCMGA and hope it continues for many years".

### Master Gardeners Share Their Thoughts

"This greenhouse has provided the Master Gardeners in Henderson County a place to grow healthy plants under near ideal conditions," said Cynthia Holifield, Co-chair of this year's plant sale, "We are able to provide the best possible plants to the people who buy them and take them home as part of our plant sale."



Pictures of greenhouse in disrepair before the partnership with HCMGA



Pictured, from left: Barbara Thompson, Yvonne Sparks, County Extension Agent Spencer Perkins, TVCC President Dr. Jerry King, David Bickerstaff, Cynthia Holifield

David Bickerstaff, HCMGA President said, "The partnership with TVCC has allowed us to achieve our mission of providing Henderson County residents with relevant research-based information for successful, sustainable, and healthy gardening. We value our partnership with TVCC and work hard to be a good steward of their asset."

The HCMGA will be holding their annual plant sale on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, at the Athens Senior Citizens Center, located at 3344 State Hwy 31 E, Athens (by the arena).

Offerings will include a wide variety of annuals, perennials, herbs, vines, succulents, houseplants, Texas Superstars, as well as bat and bird houses. This year will be one of the largest with over 5,000 plants. This is in large part due to the partnership with TVCC.

#### **About TVCC:**

Trinity Valley Community College is a learning-centered college that provides quality academic, workforce, college preparatory, student support, and community service programs that prepare

and empower students for success and promote and enhance life-long learning for all communities served. [www.tvcc.edu](http://www.tvcc.edu)

#### **About HCMGA:**

Master Gardeners are members of the local community who take an active interest in their lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers and gardens. They are enthusiastic, willing to learn and to help others, and able to communicate with diverse groups of people.

What really sets Master Gardeners apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture. In exchange for their training, persons who become Master Gardeners contribute time as volunteers, working through their Extension office to provide horticultural-related information to their communities <https://henderson-co-tx-mg.org>.



The greenhouse today under the care of Henderson County Master Gardeners

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email [hendersonCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonCMGA@gmail.com), or visit [txmq.org/hendersonmg](http://txmq.org/hendersonmg)