

Williamson County Master Gardeners Winter 2015 Newsletter

Unnamed by Jim Branch

watering the seed
and watching
and believing
and hoping
and waiting
for it to grow and emerge from
the soil
so it can be seen
what sort of thing is this that grows
within?
in the deep rich darkness that is
not dark to you
knowing that there is growth
within
but not knowing quite what it is
knowing and not knowing
trusting the seed to do its job
it knows what it is to become
and when
and so I water
and watch
and believe
and hope
and wait
and know
and not know

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President's Message

By Wayne Rhoden



Hello fellow gardeners!

This will be my last article as your president. Of course, I will still be active on the board as past president and also volunteering in various activities. I have enjoyed the last two years as your president and I know the new officers and board members will be leading you to new heights in the gardening and education fields of our association. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we will have a new Ag Agent and he/she will be visiting with all of us to get to know you and how our association works and volunteers. I know all of you will give him/her your complete support in the days to come. We will still need volunteers at the Help Desk and Jane has selected the chairs of the individual standing and sub-committees who will make this transition as seamless as possible. We also have some new support staff in the extension office and I urge you to support them also as they learn more about you and the role Master Gardeners play in support of Agrilife Extension and ultimately Texas A&M University. We cannot forget that as a part of Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service we can only give out scientifically based information when visiting with clients in our daily lives and volunteering at the Help Desk. In the information world we live in there are many solutions given to those who ask for information on the internet but not all of them have been proven by the testing and replication studies that are used by TAMU.

I have just come in from my garden and saw that all of my basil bit the dust because of the freeze last night. It was pretty close to the average first frost date given for our county. However many of my other plants survived so maybe I can enjoy them a few more days. I hope you get to enjoy your garden as much as I do. Thanks to all of you for the volunteer work that you do. I just looked at the volunteer hours for the November 1, 2014 – October 31, 2015 period that we use for certification and you volunteered 11,400 hours and gained 1,830 additional education hours this year. You are to be congratulated for all of the hard work. Hope to see you soon in the gardens.

Congratulations, Graduates!



The 2015 Williamson County Master Gardener new student class celebrated the successful completion of 13 weeks of classroom instruction on November 10 with a graduation party. Thirty students became interns after enjoying a wonderful luncheon prepared by our kitchen staff, Mary Sexton, Della Owen, and Jeanne Holmes. Other highlights of the day included a graduation cake, a plant exchange and an entertaining talk by our friend and former Extension Agent, Bob Whitney.

Seven students were honored for completing their 50 volunteer hours and 15 advanced education hours to become certified Master Gardeners. The certified members of the class who were recognized are Joy Dean, Tom Kissinger, Diane Powell, Cliff Bunn, Rod Gilbert, Dorothy Bentzin, and Loyce Engle. Please congratulate our newly certified members and interns as you volunteer with them in our projects.

The 2016 class will begin with orientation on August 9, 2016, and the schedule of classes and instructors is currently being completed. Again, we will have three information sessions to help potential students decide if they want to participate in the 2016 class. Attending one of these sessions is mandatory for students and applications are available at each of the sessions. These are usually held in March, April and June. More information will be added to our website by February. If you have friends or neighbors who might be interested in our program, please encourage them to attend the information sessions. The facilitators can be contacted by email at wcmgtraining@gmail.com for more information.

From My Garden Gate

By Sandy Watson



Tara Dillard on Design and Camellias

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike.”

— John Muir, 1838-1914, American naturalist, author, and wilderness advocate



So begins one of Tara Dillard’s blogs at taradillard.blogspot.com. Tara works and lives in the greater Atlanta area, professionally as a landscape architect and designer and personally, she is a passionate plant and garden lover. She graduated from SMU with a degree in engineering and later Perimeter College (which was absorbed by Georgia State University), in horticulture. At one time, she had a gardening show on CBS.



I discovered her through reading decor blogs and seeing her comments on the gardens pictured in these various design blogs. I did some detective work. Since we had just moved from our farm, I was grieving the loss of the farm and trying to learn how to garden in less than 6” of topsoil in a neglected-for-27-years suburban yard. I read six years of her blog in a few days and was entranced. Her revolutionary ideas intrigued me. Because of Tara, my new (old) 70’s redo will have a “vanishing threshold” from every window and door. And what is a vanishing threshold, you ask? Tara says, “Landscapes also begin inside your home. Place a focal point on axis with key views (looking from inside [your] house through windows or doors to the outside). My landscape designs are not complete unless views into windows are [also] fabulous.” Carl Jung, quoted by Tara Dillard said, “Our lives are about getting the outside to match the inside.”

Another maxim of Tara’s: Axis or Double Axis - “Design a beautiful view, go into the view & turn around and design a beautiful view in the opposite direction.” A view should be beautiful from multiple directions.



Tara also taught me the importance of my front garden design “letting people know who you are from the garden before ever entering your home.” Does your front yard intrigue? Does it make people want to know more about the person who lives inside? Or is it so generic your yard looks like everyone else’s on the block?

Some of Tara’s other mantras include “dinky is stinky”, “if you can count the number of flowers, you don’t have enough”, and “overdose on a theme.” These simple phrases may not please the gardening elite, but Tara’s genius, to me, is that she makes garden design accessible to anyone and provides years of experience in the US and across Europe free to anyone who reads her blog and digs, ahem, her style. Which, by the way, is admittedly for women.

Tara has what she calls the “southern trinity”: camellias, hydrangeas and azaleas. This trinity is difficult for us to grow in Central Texas. New breeds of hydrangeas can do well in container gardening, but azaleas and camellias cannot go into the ground. Because of Tara, I have a camellia in a pot which is blooming right now. I planted it in Miracle Grow potting mix with peat moss for extra acidity. This plant is only a year old, so we’ll see how it does. I have a 90-year-old friend living in Westlake who has old, container grown camellias that flower profusely.



You might know camellias for another purpose. *Camellia sinensis* is the tea bush and relative to ornamental camellias. The British brought the tea bush to the American South in the form of seeds to Savannah in 1744. That experiment didn't hold but the seeds in Charleston did. A successful commercial planting of tea was finally established by the Lipton Tea Company near Charleston where it is still in production although under a private label and no longer owned by Liptons.*

Dr. William Welch from Texas A&M says,

“Another possibility for growing camellias is to place them in large containers. Growing camellias in my College Station soil and water is not very practical, but I have a fairly large specimen growing in a 22-inch clay pot that is thriving on an open porch where it receives morning sun and afternoon shade. I also provide water from a cistern containing rainfall runoff from the roof. Our local water has too much sodium for continued success with camellias or many other ornamental plants. The soil mix I have used is about 1/2 sphagnum peat moss, 1/4 sharp builder's sand, and 1/4 compost.

Camellias have been important to southern gardeners from the mid-1800s to present. Unlike old garden roses, that may be rooted fairly easily from cuttings and were grown in nearly every southern garden, camellias have always been favorites in upscale gardens where the relatively high cost of the plants and difficulty in propagating them were not as significant. Although japonica camellias sometimes set seeds that can be germinated, most are reproduced from cuttings or grafted onto sasanqua rootstocks. Among the first camellias brought to America was Alba Plena, a beautiful, formal pure white, which is still popular today.

Other Southern favorites include Purple Dawn, Pink Perfection, Rose Dawn, Professor Sargent and Debutante. With careful selection it is possible to have camellias blooming from November through April. The plants grow relatively slowly, but begin flowering at a young age. At peak bloom times the bushes can be quite colorful. Individual flowers are often picked and floated in bowls.”*



I hope you look up Tara's blog. She deserves a much larger audience. She has written/co-written 5 books and lectures all over the US. She was also the past president of the American Hydrangea Society. Her books are available at Amazon.

*Dr. William Welch, Landscape Horticulturist - Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas A&M University

January-February 2007:

http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/2007/jan07/CamelliasTxGard.html

Gardeners Who Cook



Jane Bowman's Shrimp Corn Chowder

Shrimp Corn Chowder

1 pound fresh shrimp, rinsed	2 cans of potato soup
2 cups of milk	2 potatoes cooked and diced
1 large can of white corn w juice	1/3 cup cheddar cheese
1 large chopped onion	1 Tablespoon minced garlic
1 stick butter	4 oz cream cheese
1 ½ Tablespoons Creole seasoning	1 teaspoon onion salt
1 teaspoon garlic powder	

Melt butter slowly in Dutch oven. Add chopped onion and minced garlic and cook until translucent. Add other spices. Add all the other ingredients except the shrimp, milk and cheddar cheese. Add one soup can of water,

Simmer the chowder for about 25 minutes; stirring frequently to keep from scorching. Then add the shrimp and cook gently for about 20 minutes or done. Add the 2 cups of milk last. While it is cooking, add another can of water if you like. Sprinkle cheddar cheese on top when you serve.

JOSS GROWERS

By Paul Howe and Viki Strauss

Joss Growers Greenhouse is a Texas size wholesale nursery operation that propagates native plants that thrive in the arid conditions of Central Texas. Williamson County Master Gardeners (WCMG) has had a working relationship with Joss Growers since 2011. Owner, David Scott, and his foreman, Hugo Marquez, are experts in native plant propagation. Under their watchful eyes we are able to get hands-on training. The WCMG volunteers are permitted to purchase an outstanding variety of native plants. Aside from being able to purchase plants at wholesale prices, volunteers may purchase soil and containers. David Scott and Hugo are happy to explain how to propagate and where best to plant. In addition, David Scott gives WCMG wholesale prices on plants for the annual plant sale that allows a good profit that funds outreach in the Demonstration Garden, Elementary School Outreach and funds other Junior Master Gardener outreach activities.



From November 1, 2014 thru October 2015, the WCMG averaged 7 volunteers at each session and earned a total of 616 volunteer hours. Listed below are some of the plants we worked with over the past year.

Cherokee Sedge
Artemisia Powl's Castle
Berkeley Sedge
Bulbine
Gulf Muhly
Homestead Verbena
Horse Herb
Inland Sea Oats

Road Ditch Verbena
Beauty Berry
Blue Arrow
Frog Fruit
Summer Jewel Red Salvia
Tacoma Stans
Ice Plant
Jerusalem Sedge

Rudbeckia
Russian Sage
Ghost Plant
Henry Duelburg Salvia
Yellow Lantana
Texas Sedge
Turks Cap

Come out to Joss Growers and join the social fun, the learning and, of course, grab some new plants. The volunteer day is on Wednesday mornings. An occasional Saturday is scheduled for interns who are unable to make the Wednesday sessions. There are up to 10 spots that can be filled on each Wednesday. No sessions are held if the Wednesday falls on or near a federal holiday. Go to the volunteer website and sign up today. There are spots to be filled through January and February.



Demonstration Gardens

Earth-Kind Herb Trial Garden

By Sandra Roberson



Have you noticed the changes in the Earth-Kind Herb Trial Garden? Or did you even know that WCMGs have an herb garden? If you are in the first group, I hope you can say that you have noticed some changes. If you are in the second group, you need to take a tour of all the WCMG garden area! You will find many amazing things happening in the garden with lots of learning and sharing going on there.

The Earth-Kind Herb Trial Garden (HTG) is a three year trial undertaken by the WCMGs under the guidance of Fred Hall, former Williamson County Agricultural Extension Agent and Tim Hartmann, Texas A&M Earth-Kind Specialist in March of 2015.

The project began in 2014. While Tim worked on the planting design plan, volunteers removed vegetation on the 60'X40' area, soil and compost mix was added to the existing soil, and 16 foot rows and walkways were established and covered with mulch. The HTG garden design also included buffer plants to protect the study plants from the ferocious wind we often get at the Extension Office. Plans were made to purchase or donate the buffer plants and A&M provided the study plants.

The first planting day was delayed by spring rains but finally happened in April 2015, six weeks after the first organizational meeting. Several MG volunteers planted the 136 field herb plants and 65 buffer plants. A final design plan was established after this planting. (See Demonstration Garden Blog site dated 4/26/15.)

Then The Rains Came! The month of May found standing water in the pathways between the beds, mites infected many plants, some plants yellowed and some gave up and died. In June trenches on the east side were dug for drainage and a 4" flexible drain pipe was installed but the **Rains Continued to Come Down!** Twenty-one field study plants had to be replaced. (See Demonstration Garden Blog 6/28/15.) **Then the Rains Stopped!** Remember your yard in July, August and September 2015? The HTG looked the same. Summer had set in and 3 months of plant stress began.

This brings us to the fall planting season that MGs love and a renewed effort with this project. In September, Jane Bowman, VP of WCMG, sent out an email to all WCMGs asking for help with the lonely Herb Trial Garden. Another small group of 6 optimistic MG volunteers met with her to discuss the history of the garden and to develop a plan to help move the stressed gardens forward. Joanne Hoover offered to chair the new project and she contacted Tim with lots of questions about the study.

Within the next month a transformation began. The new HTG committee has completed the following:

- Reviewed protocols for plant care.
- Identified dead study plants and buffer plants.
- Purchased filler and buffer plants to replace dead plants.
- Established weekly watering assignments.
- Made permanent plant labels.
- Listed current issues such as ants and eroding mulch and



worked with A&M to find an approved A & M resolution.

- Began researching each study plant, filler plant, and buffer plant for display on the wonderful informational sign constructed by Steve Echols.



The herb field study consists of oregano, rosemary, and sage cultivars. Watering only happens if the soil gets very dry. Natural growing conditions are being utilized. A weekly observation will begin sometime in the near future. As you walk through the garden, you will find RED

dots on the study plant labels. Replacement plants were purchased for those herbs that died off due to our recent weather conditions. BLUE dots are found on the replacement plants. Buffer plants that surround the garden have NO dots. After our committee members complete their research on each of the herbs, a planting guide will be displayed on the information sign providing growing information on each cultivar.

The HTG committee will keep you updated on the progress of the garden but the best way is to observe the garden. You will be able to actually see how each cultivar is fairing in the Williamson County climate. Hopefully the HTG is on its way to a happy future!

Thanks go to lots of “secret weeders” from the Veggie Gardens. When all the beans and tomatoes were picked, they helped in the HTG. If you like to laugh and work in the soil, come work with us and the herbs!

FYI-- There are 4 similar studies going on Austin, Cleburne, Conroe, and San Antonio.



JMG Corner

Junior Master Gardener News

A lot has been happening with Junior Master Gardeners. Multiple projects are underway with help from a number of our members. Thanks to all who have participated in the past months. Check the current monthly calendar for call outs to help with current projects or contact Arlene Boyer for information.



Our crew made short work of moving soil to the raised bed around the corner. JMG thanks the interns: Rod Gilbert, Rhadika Baliga, Cynthia Norquest-Eck, Diane Powell, Clifford Bunn, Tracey Dubcak, and Loyce Engle.

Georgetown Boys & Girls Club.

A wish for a new garden bed becomes a wish granted.



Each child tends an individual 1' x 2' plot; they planted veggie seeds, bulbs, and transplants. This is everyone's favorite JMG pursuit!



Meridian School

Guy Eroncig, MG intern, along with his bin of worms may have just been the most popular MG at Meridian School's Fall Garden Party. He had some very tired worms at the end of the day!

Zion Lutheran Church and School

Master gardeners assisted junior master gardeners with the replanting of flower beds at the entryway of Zion Lutheran Church and School



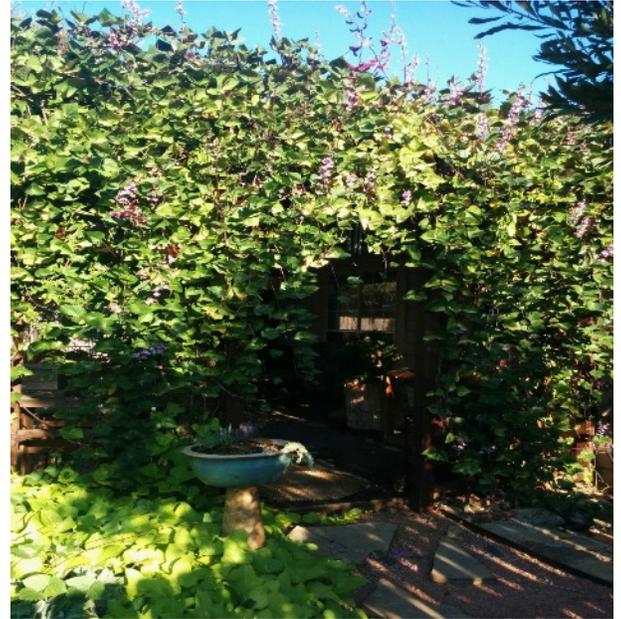
Debbie McGahey, Tracy Dubcak and Mike Linebrink removed old shrubs that had taken over the beds and needed to be dug up. They pre-dug holes for the students to plant daffodil bulbs along the foundation, and plants in the foreground.



WCMG Members Share Ideas

Under Construction: A Personal Garden for Peace and Prayer

Dina Cavazos, a new WCMG Master Gardener Intern, is building a peaceful personal space in her backyard. Here she shares photos of garden areas and some of the plants she has used. Thanks, Dina.



Purple Fountain Grass in the foreground, Monterey Oak on the right, the bed in back: Mexican Bush Sage with Potato Vine wrapped in front of it, Texas Redbud, Blackfoot Daisy. You can see a bit of Artemisia and Greggs Salvia on the far right. The potato vine was rampant! This was taken in October.

Hyacinth Bean Vine on the entrance to patio with, of course, wild potato vine



Blue Jay drinking at the disappearing fountain, cannas in a pot, Crossvine on the trellis



Fungus Gnats

by Wizzie Brown

Fungus gnat adults are small, black, long-legged flies with long antennae. Most adults are about 1/16 an inch but some can get up to ½ an inch. They are weak fliers and generally remain near potted plants, growing media, foliage or leaf litter.

Larvae, or immature, have a black head capsule and long whitish body without legs. They feed on organic matter such as mulch, compost, grass clippings, plant roots and fungi. When conditions are very moist, fungus gnat larvae can become abundant and may leave slime trails on media that looks similar to trails left by snails or slugs.

While these gnats are a nuisance they are fairly easy to manage. Indoors, it is a good idea to use yellow sticky cards as a monitoring tool. Potato pieces may also be used as a monitoring tool for fungus gnats. Imbed a peeled potato cube into media and inspect the underside of the potato and the media directly below it twice a week for fungus gnat larvae.

To manage fungus gnat populations, work on reducing excessively moist conditions. Avoid over watering and make sure that there is good drainage. The surface of container soil should be allowed to dry before watering again.

If using compost, make sure that items have been fully composted. Compost piles should be turned regularly and kept away from doors or windows. Inspect all doors, windows, vents and screens for a good seal to reduce the number of gnats that may enter a structure.

In homes, insecticides are rarely needed to manage fungus gnats. If they are needed, *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *israelensis* or the nematode *Steinernema feltiae* can be applied in containers to control larvae. Either spray on the media or apply as a soil drench. Biologicals work best when they are applied early in an infestation. If a population is already large, they may not provide the control desired.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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Gardening Tips

By Winola Van Artsdalen



Winter 2015 - 2016

During the holiday hectic times, take a moment to de-stress and enjoy your garden. As Master Gardeners, we have found a volunteer opportunity that enables us to help others while increasing our knowledge in an area of much personal benefit. Gardening stimulates our senses, promotes pleasant emotions, and reduces stress. Research has proven that patients recovering from illness will heal faster when exposed to nature. Those pleasant feelings are even stronger when we are enjoying the results of our own endeavors with added empowerment from our hard work and creativity.

As we learn about the many beautiful Central Texas native and adapted plants available, we find even more opportunities for beauty and ways to invite wildlife to our gardens. While helping the environment, we enjoy the feeling of caring and of making a difference. We feel a special connection with our world, our past, and joy in improving the future. We are most fortunate!

Hint for holiday decorations: Use local evergreens and berry-producing plants such as cedar, yaupon and other hollies, Southern magnolia foliage and spent seedheads from other plants.

Hint for holiday dinner: If you have Mexican mint marigold *Tagetes lucida* in your flower beds, finely chop some leaves, add to softened butter, shape into a roll and freeze ready for spreading outside and/or inside your holiday turkey. Delicious tarragon flavor!

Planting:

Groundcovers need to be planted now to have a strong root system before summer. Mulch to protect shallow roots during winter, but keep away from stems.

You can still plant container grown trees and shrubs.

For instructions planting trees: texastreeplanting.tamu.edu/treeplantingtools.html

Winter is a great time to plant hardy evergreen and deciduous trees.

Watch for instructions with bulbs you may have purchased to plant this winter. If possible, plan for succession of bloom. Be sure to plant at correct depth.

In making plans for late winter/early spring, remember that in the south spring is not the best time to plant. In the north, you plant in spring so plants are strong for stress of winter cold. In the south, we should plant in fall, so plants are strong for stress of summer. If you plant in spring, plants will need much more water and care.

Trimming: You can trim oak trees now when temperatures are cold, but all wounds on oak trees must be painted—any time, any size, immediately! Do not trim oak trees susceptible to oak wilt February through June. Nitidulid beetles that spread oak wilt are never 100% inactive, but the most dangerous time to prune is in mild weather as expected in February through June.

For fall berrying shrubs like yaupon holly and American beauty berry, trim lightly after berries.

Trim vitex, crape myrtles, and other shrubs/trees that have summer bloom on this year's growth in January. Rejuvenate older multi-stemmed shrubs/trees by removing old stems at the crown. Unless you desire a hedge, it is better to trim bushes for a natural shape.

Trim evergreens late winter, before new growth. Subshrubs like salvia greggii, zexmenia, skeleton-leaf goldeneye may or may not die back. Even if they do not freeze, they need to be cut back. I have tried both cutting them back halfway and down to 6 or 8 inches. Cutting back to lower height, they take a long time to grow and start blooming, but look neater. If you cut less, you are leaving more of the branch, which might give needed protection during a hard freeze.

Trim bushes with spring bloom like viburnum and lorapetalum in April/May after spring bloom.

To ensure fullness and bloom of perennials, you must “deadhead,” (remove dead blossoms), in between regular trimming. I trim dead blossoms all season and trim back subshrubs like salvia greggii in February, May and July or early August for a general guideline. Last year, with so much rain, I trimmed even more often.

The common saying is to trim roses on Valentine's Day, but that is early. That was the saying when I lived halfway between Houston and Galveston, and their spring arrived a month to six weeks earlier than here! Watch the weather. You may want to trim in mid-February or wait until later in month and even into March. Old roses do not want severe pruning, or they will “pout.”

Trim groundcovers close to ground in early spring.

Trim fall-blooming plants like aster, Mexican Mint marigold, and Mexican bush sage during summer, but stop by end of July, because they set buds in August.

Turf: Digging weeds now while they are easier to see with grass dormant will save problems later!

If you use pre-emergent, apply before February 15.

Make plans to aerate and spread top dressing this spring, but do not fertilize until after second mowing.

Keep watching that there are no leaves covering grass and blocking sunlight. Plan to aerate and spread one-half to one inch organics, fine compost, over your turf and water in for better health and moisture retention. You can spread top dressing any time except during hot weather, but, if you spread top dressing, do not fertilize, as this would be too much nitrogen. Do not fertilize until after second mowing of **grass**. (You may have mowed weeds several times, but hold the fertilizer until grass is growing!)

Source: Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension Service

Save The Date

WCMG Monthly Meetings

January Program: “Wild Bill” Moore. He will be giving a tool sharpening demonstration and teaching us how to care for our garden tools so that they will be sharp and ready for spring.

February Program: Members With Great Gardening Tips to Share

March Program: Judith Craft. Judith is a 25 year member of the Austin Herb Society and maintains the herb garden in the Zilker Botanical Garden. She will be talking about 24 unusual herbs that grow in the Garden at Zilker and their uses.

April Program: Lorig Hawkins. Lorig is the Farm Program Manager @ Farm share Austin and the co-founder of the Texas Young Farmers Coalition. She will discuss fungi, AKA mushrooms, in the garden and give an overview of her organization.

Educational Opportunities in Our Area

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Tree Talk Winter Walk

Saturday, January 23, 2016 9 am to 5 pm

Admissions Prices: The Wildflower Center will charge regular admission prices for Tree Talk Winter Walk. Get in free by becoming a member today!

Celebrate Texas trees in the Arboretum while learning about trees for your yard, ideal trees for wildlife, and tree care.

We will have a wide selection of native trees and shrubs for sale, and there will be guided walks and talks by experts and lots of family-friendly activities including shelter building with tree branches, a marshmallow roast and bonfire, storytime, swinging in the Cathedral of Oaks and a tree scavenger hunt.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Walks & Talks (Meet at the sale area) Each talk is 1 hour educational credit for Master Gardeners

10am Benefits of Trees/Local Species - Brad Hamel, Texas Forest Service

11am Tree Planting Demonstration, TreeFolks

1pm Tree Pruning Demonstration - Jim Carse, UT Austin, Urban Forestry

2pm The Importance of Native Trees - Don Gardener, Consulting Arborist

3pm Oak Wilt-Chris Dolan, City of Austin

Red Barn Garden Center

12881 Pond Springs Road, Austin

February Classes

- February 6 11:00 AM Organic Vegetable Gardening, Chuck Sodek
February 13 11:00 AM Preparing Your Landscape for Spring, Chuck Sodek
February 20 11:00 AM Organic Gardening, showcasing the benefits of choosing organic methods Chuck Sodek
February 27 11:00 AM Gardening the Natural Way: new products for 2016 Chuck Sodek

Monument Market 500 S. Austin Ave. Georgetown

January Classes

Saturday January 9th

2:00pm GARDEN CLASS “January In the Garden”. Join us for our monthly series where we go over the garden to-do list. Learn what to plant, what to harvest and other timely garden tasks. This class is perfect for the beginning gardener and those new to growing in Central Texas.

Saturday January 16th

2pm Guest Speaker GARDEN CLASS: “Getting Started with Aquaponics” with Joe Schram from Joli Farm. Come learn about an exciting alternative to conventional farming that uses up to 90% less water than other traditional growing methods

Saturday January 23rd

2:00pm GARDEN CLASS “Preparing the Soil for a New Garden” with Michelle. Get started in time for spring planting!

Saturday January 30th

2:00pm GARDEN CLASS “Growing Potatoes” with Michelle. Learn how to plant, grow and harvest these tasty tubers. We’ll talk about sweet potatoes too.

The following have not as yet announced January classes. See their web sites for updated information:

The Natural Gardener, Hill Country Water Gardens, Round Rock Gardens

***Williamson County Master Gardener Association
2015 Board of Directors and Sub-Committee Chairs***

President – Wayne Rhoden

Vice President – Jane Bowman

Secretary – JoAnn Beneat

Treasurer – Marcy Echols

Past President – Jeanne Barker

Programs – Alicia Johnson

JMG – Patsy Bredahl

Landscape – George Prall

Rose Garden – Liz and Jack Grieder

Drought Tolerant Garden – Janet White

Water Conservation – Sandra Roberson

Vegetable Gardens – Teresa Wilts

Keyhole Garden – John Clifford

Projects – Steve Echols

Awards – Dana Blair

Training – John Papich and Brenda McIndoo

Membership – Jeanne Barker

Plant Sale – Brenda McIndoo

Joss Growers – Paul Howe

Communications – Catherine Nickle

Publicity – Viki Strauss

Help desk – Kaye Davidson

Speakers' bureau – Val Black

Online Presence – Garry Bowman

Newsletter – Ann Harmon

Membership – Jeanne Barker

TMGA Directors

Wayne Rhoden

Jeanne Barker

Alternates

Jane Bowman

Open

This issue of the *Williamson County Master Gardener Newsletter* was made possible because of the contributions of the following Williamson County Master Gardeners and Interns: Wayne Rhoden (president), articles by Wizzie Brown, Jane Bowman, Arlene Boyer with Patsy Bredahl, Viki Strauss, Winola VanArtsdalen, Sandy Watson, Catherine Nickle & Ann Harmon (co-editors), and Sandra Roberson & Cathy Reidel (proofreaders).

If you would like to contribute to the Spring 2016 *Williamson County Master Gardener Newsletter*, please send your submission to Ann Harmon at aharmon@sonic.net by March 1, 2016. As you garden, volunteer and learn, please take a moment to share your experiences



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