



Fall-Winter 2018 Issue



“The Gardening Spade”

Gregg County Master Gardener Association
Quarterly Newsletter

Agents Corner...



It’s hard to believe that 2019 is almost upon us! The 2019 Master Gardener class schedule is out and we have received a few registrations already. The Fall Plant Sale was a success, as always, crowd was a little low, compared to past years, but it always a fun time to work with a great group of volunteers and enjoy the visits as well. We are looking forward to the Spring Conference, we will have Tim Hartmann, Extension Horticulture Program Specialist from College Station as our featured speaker for the day!

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Presidents Ramblings... Becky Wallace, 2018 Gregg County Master Gardener President

I don’t know about you, but after receiving over 6 inches of rain so far in October, I am very happy to see some sunshine!! Joe and I recently had to have all the rain gutters on our home replaced after the spring hailstorm damaged our roof. We thought it was a good time to reassess the drainage around our house. Our lot slopes down from the street to the house and then on to the creek beyond our property. We installed a French drain when we originally built and had all of the downspouts directed into 6-inch PVC pipe to carry water away from the house and keep it from pooling in the low areas. We installed larger gutters several years ago, but we kept having a problem with them overflowing right into the middle of the front sidewalk and creating what we came to call “Lake Wallace,” an ankle-deep pool that sometimes threatened to flood the porch and potentially, the house.



President's Message Cont.

Our gutter contractor said the only solution would be to install additional downspouts, but they would have to go in front of our porch columns and would not be aesthetically pleasing. He suggested rain chains instead. Rain chains are a functional and beautiful alternative to closed metal downspouts. The Japanese developed them hundreds of years ago to direct water from their roofs into barrels for water storage. Linked chains are probably the most original, but newer cup designs direct water more efficiently with less splashing. Rain chains come in many different shapes, sizes and finishes.

The installation was simple. We added a collection drain at the base of our rain chains and covered the area with river rocks and it works like a charm! Our gutters did not overflow a single time during our recent rains and we didn't see Lake Wallace. An added benefit – It is really fun to watch the water move down through the cups. I'm easily entertained!



I offer many thanks to David and Debbie Hackley for their efforts in organizing our plant sale. It was a tough summer for many of us growing plants, but we still managed to raise over \$1,150. This money helps defray some of the costs associated with specialist training. We have had three members complete trainings this summer: Dana Powell and Marsha Jones (Greenhouse Management Specialist) and Lisa Egner (Entomology Specialist).

Thanks also to those of you who've been giving programs throughout the community, Meloney and Larry Ferguson, Lisa Egner, Dana Powell, Marsha Jones and Martha Grissom. Marie Kerr continues to organize work days at the J. R. Curtis Garden for the Blind. Thanks to Marie and to all of you who work so diligently to keep those gardens looking wonderful.

Please tell your friends that it's time to submit an application to take the 2019 Master Gardener class, or better yet, take them one of the forms to complete. We are always looking to add more volunteers to our ranks.

Becky Wallace

2018 President, Gregg County Master Gardeners



Marie's Message;

Marie Kerr, J.R. Curtis Garden for the Blind - Volunteer Coordinator

While thinking about what interesting tidbit I could share with you about the J.R. Curtis Memorial Garden for the Blind I stopped by the Maude Cobb Office to see what they had to share. I was glad I did because what I was told is if it is a pretty day someone will be having their lunch, taking pictures or just walking around enjoying the garden. Our hard work is very much appreciated by the community and is often used as a back drop for a photo shoot or just a relaxing quiet moment in someone's busy life.

The pansies, snapdragons and various other fall and winter plants are in so if you need some quiet time drop by your always welcome. If you see a weed feel free to pull it. I would like to invite everyone to come to our work-days and help us keep these gardens the show place that they are.

J.R. Curtis Garden Photos...



Things to Do in November... By Greg Grant

- Mow frequently until first frost.
- Discontinue using landscape sprinkler systems since our cool moist season has arrived.
- Mulch fallen leaves.
- Collect pine straw for landscape mulching.
- Cut back frosted tropicals and perennials.
- Remove yellowed or dead foliage from perennials and bulbs.
- Plant trees, shrubs, and vines to take advantage of moisture, cooler temperatures, and mild winters.
- Replenish mulch to 3-4 inches especially paying attention to tender plants/tropical which need 10-12 inches, depending on depth of roots.
- Fertilize cold-tolerant herbaceous plants with 3:1:2 "lawn" fertilizer such as 15-5-10, 16-6-12, etc.
- To promote size and height fertilize trees and shrubs with a 3:1:2 "lawn" fertilizer such as 15-5-10, 16-6-12, etc.
- Bring in glass rain gauges, terra cotta planters and any other breakable lawn art before the first freeze.
- Drain water hoses and fountains.
- Buy and chill tulips and hyacinths for 6-8 weeks before planting.

Upcoming Programs & Activates...

November 13, 2018—Meet & Greet the New Agents in Gregg County

Please make plans to drop by the Gregg County Extension office to meet & welcome the new agents here in Gregg County, Mandy Patrick and Arvitta Scott! The event will be a come and go affair, starting at 4:30 and ending at 6:00 and will be held in the Gregg County Extension Auditorium.

2019 Master Gardener Class Registration

Just a reminder that registration ends for the 2019 Master Gardener class that kicks-off on January 3rd!

December 12, 2018—Annual Master Gardener Awards Luncheon & Christmas Party

The Gregg County Master Gardener Association will be hosting their Annual Year-End Awards Luncheon and Christmas gathering and will be held at Trinity Episcopal Church. here in Longview.

2019 Master Gardener ‘Tree-Give-Away’

Time for the Annual Master Gardener “Tree-Give-Away” that will be held on Saturday, January 26th from 9:00 am till 12 Noon. The annual event is co-sponsored by the Gregg Master Gardener Association and the Texas Forest Service. Participants will be able to receive ten (10) seedlings to take home and plant. Seedlings should be immediately planted or at least “heeled in” for planting later so the roots will not dry out prior to planting. Be sure to park in back parking lot and enter the building through the west end door!