

# Celebrating Community



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES  
**Cooperative Extension**  
Maricopa County

## Maricopa County Cooperative Extension

May 2018



IMPROVING THE LIVES, COMMUNITIES, AND ECONOMY IN MARICOPA COUNTY

IN THIS ISSUE

## MCCE 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Fiesta

By Ed Martin

The morning started out a bit slow but soon people began to show up and before we knew it, our parking lot was getting full and our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Fiesta was in full gear. We had a pygmy goat, an insect collection, a worm farm, and of course the blender bike, free popcorn, and face painting for the adventurous types! This year's attendance was over 300 people, with over 170 youth counted – it was truly a family affair. And along with all the fun and games we had, we also did what we do best – educate! We taught kids about nutrition as they rode the blender bike and made fruit smoothies. We taught them about gardening as they helped sort worms in the worm farm. And for the adults, our Master Gardeners were on hand with tips and recommendations for vegetable gardens as well as landscape plants. The 4-H Youth Development booth had their STEM rocket display up so kids could make their own rocket and then launch it with an empty two liter bottle.



There were definitely some future astronauts at the Fiesta that day! Attendees learned about the importance of water in our lives and in our food production. They learned about healthy eating and the importance of physical exercise. Some ventured to the turf plots to learn about alternatives to planting grass. We even had our the staff from the Roosevelt Family Resource Center out helping make homemade bookmarks! Many of the attendees were not familiar with Cooperative Extension and many were residents from the surrounding neighborhoods. As an educational outreach of the University of Arizona, we often are so busy “reaching out”, we don’t take the time to just walk down the street to meet the folks next door. The Spring Fiesta gives us the opportunities to meet our neighbors, say “hi”, and show them a little of what we can to help improve their lives and their communities. See everyone next year!



2018 Spring Fiesta



Smartscape



Community Gardens

## Community Garden Leadership Training

By Kaitlin Poe-Orsburn

MCCCE is excited to be partnering with United Way to bring training to community and school garden leaders in the communities of Maryvale, Central City, and Guadalupe. The goal of the program is to help build competency and confidence in sustainable desert vegetable production for leaders of the community. The intent is for these leaders to then take their knowledge and materials back to their gardens and classrooms and educate others on what to plant, how to plant, when to plant, and how to maximize yields to feed their community.

In March, 18 participants graduated from the Community Garden Leader Training program, the third training series since the grant began in 2017. The program hosts three courses throughout the year. Each course consists of 8-10 weekly class sessions that cover the following topics:

- \* Plant growth and development
- \* Soils and fertilizers
- \* Composting
- \* Irrigation
- \* Pest management
- \* Raised-bed construction and tools
- \* Fall vegetable gardening
- \* Spring vegetable gardening
- \* Monsoon vegetable gardening
- \* Recordkeeping

Working with volunteers, administrators, and community resources. The next training will start in June at a new location, the Pascua Yaqui Tribal building located at 9405 S. Avenida del Yaqui, Guadalupe, AZ. Classes will take place on Tuesdays for 9 consecutive weeks from June 5<sup>th</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup> from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm. While the classes are presented in English, live Spanish interpretation is available for participants. For more information, please contact Kaitlin Poe-Orsburn, Program Coordinator, at [kpoe@email.arizona.edu](mailto:kpoe@email.arizona.edu).



## Congratulations Patty Merk

Audrey Jenkins (left), CEO of Real Women Revealed, LLC, a women's empowerment organization, presented Dr. Patty Merk (center) with their 2018 Community Service Award. Also in the photo is Tamara Floyd. The award was presented during the annual Celebration of Women luncheon for International Women's Day on March 8. Patty is Area Extension Agent and Regional Specialist, Family, Consumer and Health Sciences at University of Arizona Cooperative Extension-Maricopa County. Tamara is a Program Coordinator, Sr. at UACE working with Patty at the Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center.



# Program Spotlight

## Smartscape

### A Training Program for Landscape Professionals

By

Kirti Mathura

Are you water-smart? Different programs associated with MCCE ask this question of varied audiences, Smartscape included. Developed collaboratively by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, AMWUA (Arizona Municipal Water Users Association), Tucson Water, the Arizona Nursery Association, the Arizona Landscape Contractors Association, and other industry representatives, Smartscape launched in both the Phoenix and Tucson areas in 1994. A primary goal of the course is increased water-use efficiency in all landscapes, including residential, multi-family, commercial, and municipal settings.



To achieve this, Smartscape provides a researched-based education on topics of landscape design, installation, irrigation, and maintenance specifically appropriate for our unique desert environment. Local industry experts with years of experience share applicable information through each of the eight classes. Not only do students receive the latest in plant, soil and pest research from U of A and other institutions, they also learn about the latest irrigation materials and techniques that help maximize water savings. We introduce students to representatives of organizations that provide additional training, resources, and support to the industry. Smartscape graduates finish the program with great base of knowledge and resources.

Owners, supervisors and crewmembers from professional landscaping companies, or people interested in starting a landscape business, comprise the majority of Smartscape enrollment. We also have municipal employees from the Water Conservation offices or Parks & Recreation attend. We encourage property and HOA management staff and HOA committee members to take the course to gain an understanding of best practices in desert landscapes, allowing them to wisely hire landscape contractors. Landscape architects and designers can

benefit from the course, especially gaining perspective on landscape maintenance and possible challenges associated with plant selections, soils or irrigation, and how their work might impact the long-term landscape. Some Master Gardeners take the course so that they can share information with the public through their volunteer work.

We definitely do not encourage Zeroscapes in Maricopa County! Through our program, we want everyone to understand and apply the principles of Xeriscape. They can then create and maintain attractive, water-conserving landscapes filled with fantastic colors, textures and forms, and even appropriate turf areas, allowing for beautiful and sustainable urban environments for all to enjoy.

Smartscape professionals play a critical role in the efficient use of our water resources. You can certainly consider them water-smart!

Look for Smartscape graduates in our online directory at:

<http://www.smartscape.org/>.



#### FUN FACTS

- \* More than 1500 landscape professionals working in the county are Smartscape graduates.
- \* Kirti, the program coordinator, was a graduate of the first Phoenix Smartscape course.
- \* Hiring a Smartscape professional can help residents have an alluring, desert-compatible landscape created for long-term

## Volunteer Spotlight: Master Gardener Tom Hornyan

By Yvonne Cooper

Many thanks go to Master Gardener Volunteer, Tom Hornyan, for his huge contribution to the Maricopa County Master Gardener Program. When Tom started working at the Master Gardener Help Desk four years ago, the system relied on paper “problem” tickets which often resulted in inefficient handling causing delays in ticket management and response times to client's questions.

As a computer scientist, Tom thought that the solution would be to replace the paper system with an automated one. He wrote a software program that would take a question from the initial inquiry through investigation and final response. Months of meetings, collaboration, fine tuning and approvals followed. As of May 1, 2016, the Help Desk inquiries are managed by this new electronic, ticket management system (TMS). Today, Tom states that the TMS is an easy to use, intuitive, knowledge-based system that is successfully allowing helpdesk volunteers to assist nearly 2000 callers annually.

Born and raised in Aurora, Illinois, Tom attended an electronics technical school and later graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in Computer Information Systems. Professionally, he followed his many interests. Starting as an electrical technician at an atom-smashing lab, his interest in aviation led him to a stint as an air traffic controller. Upon graduation from ASU, he went to work at Intel, where he worked until his retirement.

Tom completed the MG Volunteer training program in July of 2014. After 30 years of gardening in Arizona, retirement allowed him the time to further pursue his interest in low desert gardening. On his one acre property he has a 1,500 sq. ft. raised vegetable garden; 15 citrus, 14 deciduous fruit, and 19 Ash trees; and an automated greenhouse for plant starts. His professional background, his love of gardening, a desire to both teach and



learn, and his commitment as a volunteer has made Tom the valuable volunteer that he is at the Maricopa County Cooperative Extension.

With over 600 volunteer hours logged, Tom’s work does not stop. Tom continues to improve upon the system to keep it a user friendly system for all helpdesk volunteers and a “toolbox” of answers to a wide variety of plant and landscape questions routinely presented to the helpdesk. The TMS not only handles the incoming inquiries but tracks all statistics and runs reports of the same. The current 2000 incoming calls is expected to increase at a rate of 5% annually. We know this because the TMS predicts it!

Tom was recognized as Master Gardener Volunteer-of-the-Month by his peers in May 2016 and continues to earn that spotlight with his professional and enthusiastic commitment to the Maricopa County Master Gardener help desk. Thank you Tom!!



# The Director's Cut

By Ed Martin



Even as temperatures start to approach the 100° mark, Extension outdoor programs are in full force. We recently had our Spring Fiesta on March 24 here at the office. Led by our SNAP-Ed staff and supported by everyone in the office, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Fiesta was a great success. With over 300 people, more than half of them youth, we had a great opportunity to meet with our neighbors and people from the community and talk about what Cooperative Extension can do to help improve their lives. A big thank you to

our volunteers and to everyone in the office that came out on a Saturday to help out. Our Master Gardner class continues as we prepare our interns for volunteering as garden ambassadors for our office. The 4-H youth competed in the Maricopa County Fair April 11-13. I was fortunate enough to be able to serve as a judge this year. I think the best job I had was to judge the Cloverbuds' marshmallow rockets! All Cloverbuds' (4-H youth 5-8 years old) get participation ribbons and each was proud of the rocket they made – a stack of marshmallows held together with toothpicks and capped with a Hersey kiss capsule! Finally, we had our Farm City Breakfasts in April/early May. This is a great opportunity for you to come on out, talk with growers from Maricopa County Farm Bureau, visit with your Maricopa County Supervisors, and get a great breakfast, all at one time. Many thanks to the Maricopa County Farm Bureau and the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors for their continued support of Maricopa County Cooperative Extension. As temperatures do get on the rise, come on out and see what's growing at the county office. Our garden offers many options for plants that can hold up to the heat. Check out our website <https://extension.arizona.edu/maricopa>, call us at 602-827-8200, or follow us on our Facebook page for more information on programs and events.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

- Traci Armstrong Florian ..... Nutrition/SNAP-Ed/EFNEP  
(602) 827-8237 [tarmstro@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:tarmstro@cals.arizona.edu)
- Kim Christman..... 4-H Youth Development  
(602) 827-8291 [kchristman@email.arizona.edu](mailto:kchristman@email.arizona.edu)
- Scott Koenig..... Project CENTRL  
(602) 827-8227 [skoenig@email.arizona.edu](mailto:skoenig@email.arizona.edu)
- Ed Martin ..... County Director/ANR/Water Resources  
(602) 827-8200 [ecmartin@email.arizona.edu](mailto:ecmartin@email.arizona.edu)
- Patty Merk ..... Family and Youth  
(602) 827-8257 [pmerk@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:pmerk@cals.arizona.edu)
- Ayman Mostafa ..... Agriculture  
(602) 827-8213 [ayman@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:ayman@cals.arizona.edu)
- Rebecca Senior ..... Horticulture  
(602) 827-8276 [rsenior@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:rsenior@cals.arizona.edu)
- Kai Umeda ..... Turfgrass Science  
(602) 827-8214 [kumeda@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:kumeda@cals.arizona.edu)

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jeffrey C. Silvertooth, Associate Dean & Director, Extension & Economic Development, College of Agriculture Life Sciences, The University of Arizona.

The University of Arizona is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities.

## ABOUT TOWN

### Smartscape 101: Spanish Course

**When:** May 1, 2018 3:00pm - 6:00pm  
**Where:** Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
**More Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-05-01/smartscape-101-spanish-course>

### Annual UA Turf Field Day

**When:** May 3, 2018 7:30am - 12:00pm  
**Where:** UA Rincon Vista Sports Fields  
**More Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-05-03/annual-ua-turf-field-day>

### Harvest Desert Bean Trees for Food & Medicine

**When:** May 6, 2018 2:00pm - 4:00pm  
**Where:** Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
**More Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-05-06/dig-harvest-desert-bean-trees-food-medicine>

### Master Gardener Plant Clinic

(3rd Wednesday of Every Month)  
**Where:** Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
**More Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-04-11/maricopa-county-plant-clinic>

### Summer 2018 Community Garden Leader Training

**When:** June 5 - July 31, 2018 5:30pm - 8:00pm  
**Where:** Pascua Yaqui Tribal Building  
**More Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-06-05/summer-2018-community-garden-leader-training>

### Raised Beds: On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

**When:** June 10, 2018 2:00pm - 4:00pm  
**Where:** Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
**More Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-06-10/dig-raised-beds-your-mark-get-set-go>

### AZ Women in Agriculture Conference

**When:** July 12 5:30pm - 7:00pm  
**Where:** Westward Look Resort  
**Day 1 Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-07-12/arizona-women-agriculture-conference-day-1>  
**Day 2 Information:**  
<https://extension.arizona.edu/events/2018-07-13/arizona-women-agriculture-conference-day-2>

**Maricopa County Cooperative Extension Monthly Event Calendar**  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/maricopa>



**Check us out at:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/MaricopaCountyCooperativeExtension>

**Edited By:**  
 Edward Martin  
 Sheri Semones  
 Amber Jones  
 Mary Conner