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## Master Gardeners begin work on county plant beds

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WEATHERFORD — PARKER COUNTY — Spring has sprung and the Parker County Master Gardeners have dug in their heels and shovels in their annual spring clean up of the various plant beds located at the Parker County Extension Office, 604 N. Main St. in Weatherford.

While the recent rainfall caused them to get a late start, much was accomplished by the group Monday.

“We weeded and prepped our kitchen garden bed for planting,” Publicity Chair Ava Blais said. “We also weeded and did some heavy pruning in our all seasons’ bed, our wildlife bed and the water-wise bed. We are also in the process of re-designing two beds at the end of the north side of the building.”

Blais said there are plans to use the area around the newly re-walled oak tree to demonstrate ground covers for the shade. “We are grateful to county leaders for repairing the wall recently so that we can move forward with plans to use that area as a demonstration area,” Blais said.

All of these beds have different purposes and the plant material used reflects applications that home gardeners can use successfully.

Though they are the pros when it comes to gardening, Blais said there are always opportunities to learn, especially when it comes to horticulture.

“These beds also allow us to learn, as well,” she said. “Occasionally, we will have failures that we might not have expected, so it is a learning ground for us, sometimes. We consider these demonstration beds as a free, public resource for citizens to view and get ideas for their own homes.”

Clean up and beautification of the beds with native plants is not the only thing sprouting with the master gardeners.

“We will be manning an ‘ask a master gardener’ booth at the Chandor Gardens event this Saturday,” she said referring to the Spring Fling Weekend scheduled for 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.



COURTESY PHOTO A Giant Pineapple? No it is an Agave Plant that Master Gardeners Ross Floyd, left, and Philip Craighead are working on during their spring clean up of the public flower gardens located at the Parker County Extension Office, 604 N. Main St. in Weatherford, which are filled with native grasses and plants. The Master Gardeners encourage the public to come and view the beds as a way to learn about what kinds of plants would work well in the North Texas climate.

“We are also offering a second seminar on vegetable gardening this Saturday at the Weatherford Farmer’s Market plus we will have several more seminars on different subjects at the area nurseries through mid-June and a drip irrigation program at the National Vietnam Museum Gardens in May,” Blais said.

Their annual spring plant sale will take place from 8 a.m. to noon April 17.

“The spring plant sale is our largest fundraising event of the year,” she said. “That is how we fund our activities, including our educational events and programs along with our gardening projects that are county wide.”

With funding provided by the Parker County Commissioners Court for a plant study at the Parker County Farm, the master gardeners took the information to area school districts to assist science teachers in helping to educate students about native plant and grasses, as well as the topic of horticulture as a whole.

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