



Parents and children participated in the Storytime activities focusing on the promotion of literacy with the Cat in the Hat.

#### IMPROVING THE LIVES, COMMUNITIES, AND ECONOMY IN MARICOPA COUNTY

## Dr. Seuss & Friends Gala

By Gina Rosenfeld

Each spring, the Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center (FRC) hosts a special community event for the families in the south Phoenix area. This year, the staff of the FRC went all out and held a traditional Dr. Seuss and Friends Gala on March 12 to celebrate his birthday. Forty nine (49) families including 77 adults and 113 children attended. Although the event was family oriented, activities were primarily focused on children ages 0-5 years old. Many of the families, along with staff members, dressed up as storybook characters. One of the families came as Thing Dad, Thing Mom, Thing 1, Thing 2 and Thing 3. Everyone enjoyed the fun hands on activities, which included arts and crafts with Fancy Nancy, Skippy Jon Jones, and Garfield. Children of all ages enjoyed drumming lessons taught by Ron Liggins with Unique Beat N U and music with parachute activities. Other fun experiences included fishing with Rainbow Fish, ring toss, and face painting. In addition to the many craft activities, parents and children participated in the Storytime activities with focus on the promotion of literacy with the Cat in the

Hat, Skippy Jon Jones and Fancy Nancy who read stories with their characters in them. Each of the 113 children that attended the Dr. Seuss and Friends Gala received a free book. Special guest visitors were Phoenix Police Officers who talked to the children about their occupation as police officers. They gave out information to the families on important topics such as Firearms Responsibility in the Home, Burglary Prevention, and a Family Guide to Using the Internet. Special drawings were held throughout the evening with raffle gifts that were provided by the Scottsdale Kachina Lions Club. Thanks also goes out to the United Way for donating books. During the course of the evening, parents and children strolled over to the best Chicago Style Hotdog vendor for hotdogs, chips and a drink. As families were leaving, they stopped to take a photo with the Cat in the Hat as a souvenir to remember The Dr. Seuss and Friends Gala. Both adults and children alike had an amazing time at this up-beat community event.

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES

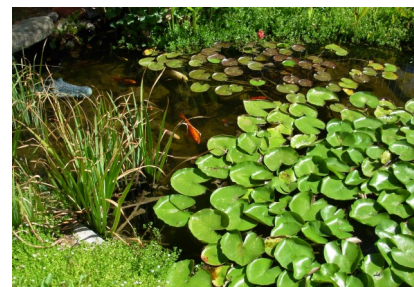
Cooperative  
Extension

Maricopa County

# Maricopa County Cooperative Extension

## May 2015

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## Real Gardens for Real People

By Jo Cook

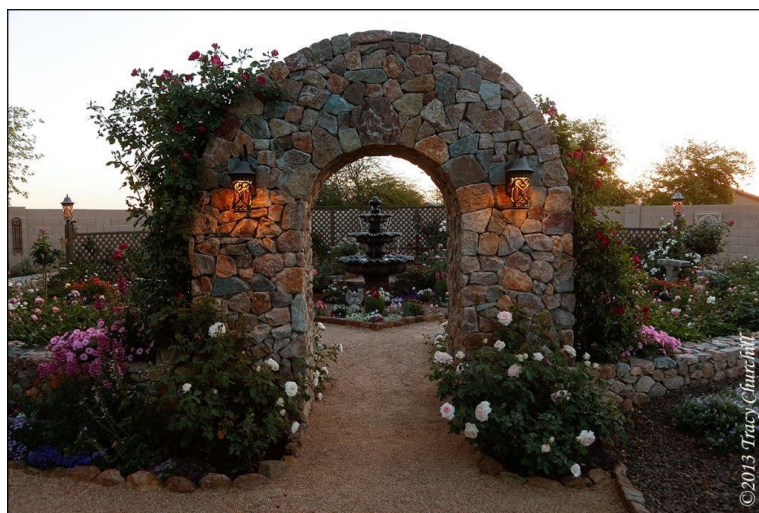
With six private gardens and a community garden, the 2015 Real Gardens for Real People tour gave about 400 attendees an up-close look at the beauty that can be achieved in landscapes and gardens in the desert Southwest.

As always, the success of the tour was due to the more than 130 Master Gardeners who helped to plan and carry out the tour. Highlights of the tour included:

- Plant labels for over 800 plants helped guests identify plants and plant combinations to try in their own gardens.
- Fourteen interactive displays on topics from “All About Aloes” to “Guarding Your Turf” and “Manage Pests Naturally” ensured guests left knowing exactly what to do to model the gardening practices they saw on the tour in their own landscapes.

“I really liked that there was so much variety in the real gardens, fun, beautiful, awe-inspiring, ‘you can do this in the desert?’” — Comment by tour-goer at 2015 RGRP

The next Real Gardens for Real People tour will be on March 12, 2016. The garden selection team is already in



*A Work of Heart Garden focuses on roses, fruit trees, grapes, vegetables and herbs.*

the process of evaluating prospective gardens. To download plant lists from the 2015 Real Gardens for Real People Tour, go to [cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/rgrp/gardens.php](http://cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/rgrp/gardens.php)

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## Dotty Spears Receives University of Arizona's Highest Honor

Dotty Spears received a surprise visit from the Office of the President early in April to present to her the Billy Joe Varney Award for Excellence, the highest award given by the University of Arizona to an employee. Dotty has been an employee for the University of Arizona for 24 years. She has left a legacy of success for the University of Arizona with each assignment she has touched. Dotty started in Coconino County as a Home Living Assistant. Later, she joined the 4H staff at the Cooperative Extension office in Maricopa County and transitioned to “SNAP-Ed” (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education). She has built a program that serves all of Maricopa County and employs 25 staff. Due to Dotty’s efforts, additional collaborations and a strong rapport

were built with the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) and a new relationship was started with the Hualapai Indian Reservation. Dotty’s service to the University extends beyond the programs she works with. She has used her own time to travel to Nicaragua to teach gardening and nutrition. She has mentored many students and staff, inspiring them to achieve their college degrees. She started a Boy-Scout troop and the first softball league in the town of Page. Dotty helps support a local food bank, helping fill their pantry which serves over 50,000 people annually. These are just a few of her overall successes. Needless to say, she is a remarkable example of University excellence!



*Dotty Spears receives the Billy Joe Varney Award for Excellence, the highest award given by the University of Arizona to an employee.*



## Turfgrass Science Extension Programming

**Hybrid bermudagrasses**

on golf greens and fairways, stadium fields, and around homes that are sodded do not produce pollens that cause hay fever.

**Golf course greens**

are commonly mowed at less than 1/10<sup>th</sup> inch height and fairways at less than 1/2 inch compared to our home lawns that are cut at 1-2 inches.

**Phoenix area**

golf courses are limited to using only 4.9 acre-feet per year of water.

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## Program Spotlight: Turfgrass Science Extension Programming in Central Arizona

Important components of Arizona's economy are intimately linked to the production and management of quality turfgrass. Golf and the Waste Management Open tournament, Cactus League baseball, Cardinals football, Diamondbacks baseball, the Fiesta Bowl, the Super Bowl, and ASU sports all require quality turf surfaces. Also, our schools, city and neighborhood parks, residences, and commercial properties have turfgrasses for function and aesthetic enhancement.

The turfgrasses managed by professional golf course superintendents, sports turf managers, school and municipal facilities personnel, and commercial landscapers get assistance from the University of Arizona Turfgrass Research and Extension program; a program that continually delivers up-to-date research findings that help to optimize the growing of quality turf in a harsh environment.

Some of this needed research is generated on the UA Karsten Turfgrass Research Facility in Tucson, where long-term experiments have helped to quantify the water requirements of desert turfgrass systems and developed procedures for using poor quality water for irrigation. For example, everyday in the *Arizona Republic*, the weather page shows how much irrigation water is needed for turfgrasses. The amount of water to apply is based on weather and the grass' needs, calculated by the UA Arizona Meteorological Network (<http://ag.arizona.edu/azmet/>). Use of reduced quality or reclaimed water for irrigation of turfgrass has expanded in recent years. Studies conducted at the Karsten Research Facility have addressed the management factors, such as aerification, application of soil amendments, and leaching, that are required to avoid problems with the use of these waters.

The winter grasses that make golf courses appealing to out-of-town golfers and



luxury homes sites is made possible by research. Research was conducted to determine the proper over-seed preparation techniques and the optimal amount of ryegrass seed to be over-seeded in October when temperatures are right.

Collaborative and demonstrative research projects are commonly conducted with the professional turf managers at the site of specific turf problems, such as weed infestations or insect invasions. New technologies are explored and investigated so that locally relevant research information is directly transmitted to the end users to see and experience.

Regular educational opportunities include the annual Desert Turfgrass School held every year in January. The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Turf School will be celebrated with the 2016 class. An annual Spring Turfgrass Seminar, such as the recent Football Field Day at the Cardinal Stadium or the annual Maricopa County Short Course in August, utilizes attractive venues and invites nationally recognized experts in the turf field.

## The Director's Cut

By Ed Martin

We are off to a fast-paced start here at MCCE as the cool weather starts to fade and we all get ready for the Arizona Summer. Our Master Gardeners had their Real Gardens for Real People tour. This event showcased some of the most beautiful gardens in the county, all done by "real people." Check out our Facebook page; our new cover photo is from the tour. We also celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday at the Roosevelt Early Childhood Family Resource Center with Dr. Seuss & Friends Gala. There, kids learned about the Cat in the Hat, an elephant named Horton, and just how fun reading can be. We also had our Farm-City breakfasts at the end of April. These breakfasts are sponsored by the Maricopa County Farm Bureau and Maricopa County Cooperative Extension. We had five breakfast in all, one in each of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors' districts. Hosted by a local grower, Supervisors and local city/urban leaders learned about agriculture and the challenges our growers face in producing the food and fiber we all need. All five Supervisors attended the breakfast and everyone walked away with a better appreciation for the growers of Maricopa County. Our turfgrass and agricultural programs were in high gear with the change in weather, transition to Bermuda grass, and the planting of our spring crops. Finally, I want to congratulate Ms. Dotty Spears, Program Coordinator Senior, here at MCCE for receiving the Billy Joe Varney Award for Excellence, the highest award given by the University of Arizona for employees. Outstanding job!



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### ABOUT TOWN

#### Kindergarten Readiness Night

When: May 7 5:00pm  
Where: Martin Luther King, Jr. School  
Roosevelt Family Resource Center  
4615 S. 22nd St., Phoenix, AZ 85040  
More Information: (602)980-3692

#### Advanced Smartscape: Irrigation

When: May 7, 14 and 21  
1:00pm- 6:00pm  
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
More Information: <http://www.smartscape.org/>

#### Kindergarten Readiness Workshop

When: May 11 - June 1 Mon. & Wed. 9:00am - 11:00am  
June 8 - June 24 Mon. & Wed. 9:00am - 11:00am  
Where: Martin Luther King, Jr. School  
Roosevelt Family Resource Center  
4615 S. 22nd St., Phoenix, AZ 85040  
More Information: (602)980-3692

#### Beginning Farmer Mixer

When: May 19 5:00pm - 7:00pm  
Where: Boulder on Broadway  
530 W. Broadway Rd. Tempe, AZ 85282  
Contact: Karen Salem (602) 827-8271  
[kmsalem@email.arizona.edu](mailto:kmsalem@email.arizona.edu)

#### Turning Dreams into Reality: How to Start a Farm in Arizona Workshop

When: May 19 - 20 7:30am - 5:00pm  
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension  
More Information:  
<http://extension.arizona.edu/turning-dreams-reality-o>

#### Childhood Obesity (Spanish): AZ Kith & Kin Health & Safety Conference

When: May 30 11:00am  
Where: Arizona Biltmore  
Contact: Claudia Ortiz-Vazquez (480) 829-0500 Ext. 1128

#### Food Addiction (Spanish): AZ Kith & Kin Health & Safety Conference

When: May 30 11:00am  
Where: Arizona Biltmore  
Contact: Claudia Ortiz-Vazquez (480) 829-0500 Ext. 1128

#### New Technologies for Arizona Field Crops Workshops

When: June 3 9:00am - 2:00pm  
Where: Maricopa Agricultural Center (MAC)  
Contact: Ayman Mostafa (602) 827-8213  
[ayman@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:ayman@cals.arizona.edu)



Check us out at:

<https://www.facebook.com/MaricopaCountyCooperativeExtension>

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