



Marjie Nelson



🌸 **Family information:** *Husband, Mark. Two poodles, Babyface and Killer. We are “quasi-parents” to my niece and my husband’s nephew after each of them lost a parent.*

🌸 **Employment status—previous and/or current:** *Upon moving to Texas, I decided to retire. Prior to our move I was Human Resources Manager of We Care Homes, a division of Lutheran Social Services of Mid-America. Our division provided a home-like setting for adults with mental retardation/developmental disabilities.*

🌸 **What does your gardening background or experience consist of?** *Most of my adult life was spent in Southern California where most things stay green most of the year. We had purchased a home from an older couple whose hobby was raising roses—57 bushes! Soon after we arrived in Texas (which we absolutely love), I volunteered at the Fort Worth Botanical Garden Greenhouse and learned a lot about gardening in Texas.*

🌸 **How many years have you been a Master Gardener?** *This is my first year. I am an intern and I tell people I am a master gardener with a little “m” and “g”.*


🌸 **How did you discover the Tarrant County Master Gardener Association?** *A good friend, Jackie Hoover (class of '98) told me all about TCMGA.*


🌸 **What do you like best about being a Master Gardener?** *The great people I’ve met, the interaction with others, the knowledge I’ve acquired. It will be a part of my life the rest of my days.*


🌸 **What positions, if any, have you held in the Master Gardener Association?** *I recently volunteered to overhaul the reference library at the TCMGA office. The books are in the process of being computerized, allowing people to search for a book by*


subject, author, etc. Valerie Freund, Derald Freeman (fellow interns) and Jackie Hoover have provided great support.

 *On which Master Gardener Projects do you like to work? Do you have a favorite project and if so, what about it makes it special for you. I enjoy working with Gay Larson at the Union Gospel Mission, with Judy Ratzlaff at the Willow Park Demo Garden, with Heather Thormahlen at the FWBG greenhouses, and helping Jackie Hoover with her Trinity Bible Church landscape project. The people are what make it such a great experience. They are so appreciative and I've learned a great deal from them. I wish there were more hours in a day—then I'd be a docent at the FWBG with Steve Chamblee and I'd work at BRIT.*

 *What is your favorite plant? I LOVE blue/purple plants. I purchased several plumbago auriculata plants earlier this year and they have been non-stop bloomers. Can't believe the gorgeous purple of the beauty-berry bush.*


 *What is your favorite nursery or plant source? The past couple of years, friends and I have taken a jaunt down to Brenham to the Antique Rose Emporium in the spring. Locally, I shop at Stewart's Nursery in Weatherford and at Calloway's.*

 *What has been your most successful plant to grow? Turk's cap. Can't believe the number of blooms still on the bush!*

 *What is your biggest gardening mistake? Shortly after we moved here, I created stonework-edged beds around our red oaks in the back yard. I then put newspapers down and had some young men put down a truckload of topsoil in the beds. I was very proud and told Heather (at FWGB) about my recent accomplishment. She told me that the trees would be dead real soon if I didn't remove all that dirt. Ugh. I learned the hard way that you don't smother the roots if you want the tree to thrive, much less survive.*

 *What do you enjoy most about gardening? Being outside, making the yard a welcoming place, the exercise, helping others, the sense of being one with nature.*

 *What gardens have you visited (local and/or out-of-town)? Do you have a favorite and why? Fort Worth Botanical Gardens, Dallas Arboretum, Clark Gardens, Chandor Gardens, and I especially enjoyed visiting Mary Nell Hubbard's garden (class of '03).*

 *What other hobbies or interests do you have? I collect corn, anything related to corn. I've hand quilted in the past and am now taking machine quilting lessons. I've enjoyed joining the YMCA and have taken up free weights. Really enjoy playing Mexican train, too. I also volunteer at Wycliffe Bible Translators in Duncanville, performing various human resources related tasks, as well as submitting grant proposals.*