



STRENGTHENING OKLAHOMA FAMILIES Family and Consumer Science News

Terrariums can introduce a new generation to gardening

When people think of gardening, they probably envision the traditional plot of land in the landscape filled with vegetable plants, flowers and shrubs. It's possible, however, to have a tiny garden inside the home.

Terrariums not only add to a home's décor, they are also a great way to introduce the younger generation to gardening and help foster the love of the hobby, said Shelley Mitchell, 4-H Youth Development horticulture specialist.

"Gardening with toddlers and preschoolers allows them to experience plant care as well as develop an appreciation of plants and learn where some of their food comes from," Mitchell said. "They also learn responsibility, team work and gain a respect for nature. Children take great pride when helping adults with a hands-on project."

With the traditional gardening season winding down, children can still get involved in gardening by setting up a terrarium in the house. The environment inside the terrarium allows youngsters, as well as adults, to grow some plants they may not be able to grow outdoors.

A terrarium is a garden in an enclosed glass or plastic container. With proper care, a terrarium creates a humid atmosphere that protects tender, tropical plants that are otherwise difficult to grow in Oklahoma's dry atmosphere.

"While there are some plants that are suitable for both, succulents are a category of plants that shouldn't go in a terrarium," Mitchell said. "Succulents thrive in drier soil and low humidity, which is pretty much the opposite of a terrarium."

Selecting the right terrarium container is important. It should be made of clear glass and have a tight-fitting lid. If you don't have a lid, the opening can be covered with clear plastic wrap. You can upcycle an old aquarium or glass gallon-sized jars; just make sure they are clear.

Mitchell said good potting soil from the local garden center is a must for a successful terrarium.

"It's not recommended to use garden soil because it's too heavy and doesn't provide adequate aeration or capillary movement of water," she said. "It also likely contains weed seeds, insect eggs and disease-causing organisms, none of which would be beneficial in your terrarium."

Choose naturally dwarf, slow-growing, high humidity tolerant plants that do well in low to medium light levels where the terrarium is placed.

"Get creative with textures and shades of green to create visual interest," she said. "Once planted, place the terrarium near a window but avoid direct sunlight. Don't be alarmed if the walls of the terrarium fog up in the first few days. It may take a couple of days to establish a rain cycle within the terrarium."

To avoid the plants outgrowing the terrarium, keep the use of fertilizer low – about half the rate and frequency recommended on the label.

More detailed information, along with a list of suggested terrarium plants, is available in the OSU Extension fact sheet [HLA-6438 Terrariums](#).



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Dewey County OHCE Notes -



2023 Program Plans

It's time to start making plans for the 2023 program year. Each member can contribute ideas for monthly lessons, and county workshop or tours. The ideas will be assembled and members will be able to vote for their favorites at the county meeting on October 30th.

The state and/or district lessons that have been selected for 2023 are:

* Say Yes to FCS presented by Suzette Barta.

Program to encourage youth to consider Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) as a career path.

* Character Critters presented by Laura Hubbs-Tait

Program to teach good character traits to small children.

* Families and Mental Health by Matt Brosi

* Eating Healthy with Rising Food Prices by Janice Hermann

Dewey County Fall Association Meeting

Mark your calendars and join the fun on → **Sunday, October 30, 2022 at 4:00 P.M.**

Agenda will include program planning for the 2023 year, a short business meeting, a fun lesson, and great time with other members.

- ◆ Host club - Seiling Community Homemakers
- ◆ Entertainment - Fun Times
- ◆ Registration - Camargo OHCE

"It's the first day of autumn! A time of hot chocolatey mornings, and toasty marshmallow evenings, and, best of all, leaping into leaves!"

~ Winnie the Pooh



2022 OHCE BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

The proposed OHCE constitution change is to be voted on at the county meeting on October 30th. The state OHCE committee recommends this change in order to be in compliance with OSU and the federal government.

Article IV – Membership

SECTION 1. The membership of the Dewey County OHCE Association shall consist of the executive officers: president, vice president; secretary, treasurer, reporter, parliamentarian, and historian, plus all other members. Membership is open to all persons irrespective of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, national origin or status as a veteran.

Proposed Change: SECTION 1.

The membership of the Dewey County OHCE Association shall consist of the executive officers: president, vice president; secretary, treasurer, reporter, parliamentarian, and historian, plus all other members of OHCE clubs in Dewey County who support and advance OHCE objectives and whose bylaws do not conflict with those of the parent organization. Dewey County OHCE does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity/ expression, disability, or veteran status in any of its policies, practices or procedures.

Addressing mental health needs in families

The last couple of years have been stressful, and while mental health issues have always been common, there has been a significant increase in mental health conditions in both adults and children since the pandemic.

Matt Brosi, OSU Extension family sciences specialist, said many of the issues we are seeing deal with anxiety and depression.

“This highlights the increased need for attention for maintaining mental health and wellbeing and finding solutions to recognize and address mental health challenges,” Brosi said. “Starting with the family unit is good because it creates a solid foundation for both preventative process and mobilizing resources when needed.”

Research indicates parents are experiencing burnout at a higher rate, and balancing increased work demands outside of the home, especially post-covid, exacerbates this process. Add other stressors such as single parenting, parent(s) with mental health issues and children with mental health issues (ADHD, anxiety, depression,), significantly increases the susceptibility to burnout.

Brosi said parental burnout is leading to increased parent mental health issues, which can lead to utilizing maladaptive coping mechanisms, including substance abuse and utilizing more punitive discipline practices.

“When there’s a breakdown in the parenting system, there are ripple effects in how relationships are managed. Burnout also affects a parent’s ability to effectively parent their children. This can result in child behavioral disruptions, externalization of stress and engaging in attention-seeking behaviors,” he said. “It can also cause children to internalize stress and feel isolated, therefore often leading to anxiety and depression.”

Recognizing and intervening the burnout process is key to improving both parent and child mental health. In order for parents to address their own burnout, they must schedule time for their partner/significant other; practice setting and holding boundaries and saying no when possible; take time for self-care, especially exercise, sleep, mindfulness and hobbies; and stay connected to other adults.

When dealing with adolescents, parents need to hold their boundaries and identify rules/expectations that are important to them, then let go of as many other things as possible, said Jordan Shuler, doctoral student in Human Development and Family Science at OSU.

“It’s important to be available to talk with adolescents on their own terms and try not to push for interactions,” Shuler said. “However, try to spend time in hobbies with your kids to create the possibility for interactions. Also, acknowledging and validating children’s emotions helps them understand their experiences are real, understood and accepted.”

Other ideas Shuler offers including being available to your teen and remind them they are safe and not alone; get to know your teen’s friends and dating partners by allowing them to spend time at your home; and rebuilding connections with your teen.

Shuler’s strategies for parents with pre-adolescent children include having regular routines for waking up, going to school and bedtime because this provides children with a sense of predictability and safety.

“Work to verbally acknowledge your child’s emotions, thoughts, beliefs and experiences,” he said. “This doesn’t mean you agree with them, but instead, shows you acknowledge the child has their own and those experiences are real.”

Identify activities your child enjoys and join them in their play. As with older children, set your boundaries according to what’s important and let go of other things. It’s important to balance parental warmth with firm boundaries. Always discipline behavior, not emotions. Discipline is an opportunity to teach rather than punish.

Shuler said it’s important for parents to be a calm presence. This doesn’t mean not ever feeling sad, angry or disappointed. Parents need to acknowledge the emotion in themselves, but when expressing it, do so in a respectful, calm manner. This models to your children how to behave when experiencing uncomfortable emotions.

“Parents must realize they have to help themselves before they can be their best selves when parenting,” Brosi said. “This means taking care of your own needs as a parent, including getting professional help when needed to manage burnout, relationship issues and mental health challenges.”



Mental health

Oklahoma Home & Community Education, Inc. is a local and state wide partner with Cooperative Extension which brings the best knowledge from OSU to its members. Join a local OHCE group and enjoy programs that help make Oklahomans be their best.

www.OHCE.okstate.edu



Family & Consumer Sciences helps communities, families, youth and individuals address issues of health, wealth and well-being through research-based Extension education and programs that are proven to work.

Dewey OHCE CALENDAR - -

September lesson - wreaths

Sept. 1	Camargo meeting
Sept. 7	Fairest of the Fair
Sept. 8-10	County Fair
Sept. 13	SCH meeting

October lesson - Fabulous Faux Pumpkins

Oct. 6	Camargo meeting
Oct. 11	SCH meeting / membership drive
Oct. 30	County Fall Association meeting

November lesson - Partially Homemade

Nov. 3	Camargo meeting
Nov. 8	SCH meeting
Nov. 24	Happy Thanksgiving

Fun Times OHCE meets every Tuesday and Friday morning at 9:00 at the senior center in Seiling.

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Literacy can affect a person's health

How does literacy affect a person's health? Literacy is the ability to read, write, compute and solve problems of proficiency necessary to function at a job, in the family and in society. So, what exactly is health literacy? It's the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to make informed health-related decisions and actions for themselves.



Megan Monteith, Oklahoma State University Extension health disparities area specialist, said health literacy requires a complex group of reading, listening, analytical and decision-making skills, along with the ability to apply these skills to health situations.

“Health literacy is a key social determinant of health, or factor in the environment that affects people’s health. More than one-third of adults in the U.S. have low health literacy,” Monteith said. “According to the National Center for Education Statistics, people aged 65 or older with self-reported poor health, have health insurance from Medicare Medicaid or have no insurance; live below the poverty level; are Hispanic or Black; and more likely to have poor health literacy skills.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that nine out of 10 adults struggle to understand and use health information when it’s unfamiliar, complex or filled with jargon.

“Unfortunately, limited health literacy has very real consequences on a person’s health. Adults with limited health literacy have more serious medication errors; higher rates of emergency room visits, hospitalizations and death; and worse preventative care and health outcomes for their children,” she said. “In addition, those adults are more likely to report poorer overall health and have poorer ability to manage chronic diseases, and they’re less likely to understand their diagnosis.”

Monteith also noted that individuals with low health literacy are less likely to have screenings or preventative care, tend to seek treatment in later stages of the disease and are more likely to be hospitalized and re-hospitalized.

Some individuals have difficulty understanding the correct dosage of medicines, misinterpret warnings on prescription labels or simply don’t know when their next appointment is scheduled.

“Each day, millions of adults make decisions and take actions on issues that protect not only their own well-being, but also that of their family members,” she said. “This goes beyond the traditional health care settings such as a doctor’s office or hospital. These actions take place in homes, at work and in schools across the state and country. The combination of errors made with these decisions is estimated to cost the health care system between \$50 billion and \$73 billion per year.”

This is why it’s so important for individuals to know how to read, write, compute and solve problems. In Oklahoma, 43% of the residents are unable to perform more than simple, everyday literacy activities. On average, about 24 percent of students starting high school as a freshman drops out of school prior to graduation. Also, 59% of Oklahoma students live in poverty.

“A rise of 1% in literacy scores leads to a 2.5% rise in labor productivity,” Monteith said. “The higher the literacy scores, the more likely individuals are of having a better understanding of health issues and treatment.”

Dewey County OHCE Fair Report



Quilt Block Challenge:

Twenty-eight quilt blocks were completed and placed in the Quilt Block Challenge at the county fair. The fair goers had the opportunity to “put their money where their mouth is” by voting with a donation to the scholarship quilt fund.

- * The quilt block that collected the most donations and receives first place was submitted by Conny Everett
- * Second place was submitted by Joy Trammell
- * Third place was submitted by Katelyn King

Congratulations! And thank you to all who made quilt blocks. We now have the 30 blocks needed to assemble the quilt!

Club Fair placings:

Camargo OHCE received a blue ribbon for an outstanding educational booth. They based the booth on July monthly lesson, “How Much Toilet Paper is Too Much?”

Seiling Community Homemakers received a blue ribbon for an outstanding exhibit booth. It featured a promotional board of their club activities. At least a dozen exhibits made by club members were artistically displayed around the board.

The scrapbook entered by Camargo OHCE received first place.

One photo entered by SCH received first place and another received second place in the photography contest.

Several members from all four clubs entered items in open class. They were all top quality entries!



Concession stand:



Thank you to everyone who helped with the concession stand at the fair. Congratulations to Joy Trammell for completing her first year as kitchen manager. Good job, Joy!!

Some donated delicious homemade desserts, others gave their time on Thursday, Friday, and / or Saturday to work in the concession stand. Everyone pulled together and each person did what they were able. We successfully satisfied fairgoers with good nutritious meals and snacks for the three days. There were lots of positive reviews, especially on the coconut cream pie and chocolate delight.