

2020 THM Landscape Committee Report

We intended on improving the Bassoon courtyard and our Fordshire and Stonehouse entrances; however, those plans were put on hold when CIP started in August. Knowing the pool grounds would not be affected by the project, our focus was on improving the pool lawn and landscaping within the gated area.

In order to understand why so much of the pool area was bare ground only, we sent several samples for soil analysis to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. The analysis showed a significant lack of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (essential to a healthy soil) and an overabundance of calcium and other micronutrients.

Over the following 3 months, following the organic lawn care recommendations posted on both Southwest Fertilizer and Buchanan's Nursery websites, as well as other sources, we manually pulled weeds, aerated bare areas, and applied leaf mold compost as an amendment. To the entire lawn, we applied corn gluten meal to prevent weed seeds germination, added MicroLife Brown Patch as well as compost. The final step took place on Saturday, November 21st with the laying of 2 pallets of Palmetto St. Augustine grass, completed in less than 2 hours by an energetic group of THM neighbors, most of whom also participated in the 3-4 previous workdays preparing the grounds.

At our request, Texas Lawn graciously left several bags of leaves (as well as grass and other materials) for us to shred. Quickly realizing how inefficient that plan was (!), we are focusing on collecting fallen leaves ourselves for shredding to make our own leaf mold compost. As of late December, two compost bins, located on the pool grounds, are nearly full of shredded leaves, with an additional 5 bags waiting for a third bin. Plans are to continue using recommended organic methods to care for this beautiful community space.

A very special THANK YOU! to Chuck Robinson, Bill and Janice Dana, Randy Chitwood, and Kristin Mahan for their energy, enthusiasm, and interest throughout this project. Thank you also to Kristin's children Emily, Stewart, and Charlotte and to Laddie Kajs for helping with the laying of the sod. And special thanks to Cindy and the THM Board for their support and encouragement.

Submitted by Lois Hamblin, Landscape Committee Chair