

## Fall into Good Planting Habits

by Erin Oleksiuk-District

Technician, Coke County Soil and Water Conservation District

Fall is the time for planting in West Texas! Tree roots and shrubs grow whenever the temperature is roughly 40 degrees. Planting in the fall and winter months give trees time to establish and ready themselves for the harsh summer months. If cared for properly, your trees will be bursting with life in the spring!

It is very important to plant and care for your new trees properly. Trees can easily become damaged during transportation from the nursery to the home. If moving a tree by truck or trailer, make sure the limbs and leaves are wrapped with burlap or a bed sheet to protect them from the wind. An uncovered ride home can break limbs and cause leaves to drop after planting.

During the first growing season it is crucial to make sure the tree has received proper watering; a new tree will need to be slightly watered everyday for the first week after planting, every other day the second week, every third day the third week, and once a month thereafter.

Trees do not need fertilizer after planting, spring is the time to fertilize but even then it is recommended to go light on the fertilizer to avoid burning the roots. Staking or tying down a tree should be a last resort; ropes can damage tree bark and will weaken a tree by not allowing it to strengthen itself against the elements.

It is very disheartening to have a tree die; these are the top 10 reasons trees don't survive:

10. Tree is not suitable to live in West Texas heat. Do some research to find the best trees for your area.

9. Not adapted to the local, clay soil. Clay soil can form a slick surface on the sides of the hole that will prevent root growth if not broken up properly.

8. Trunk was damaged during transport or planting. The vascular system of a tree is just below the bark. Young trees have thin bark and can be easily damaged.

7. Wire stake and tags were not removed from tree. Remove all tags from tree and avoid staking.

6. Tree was planted too deeply. The top of the root ball should be even with the surrounding soil.

5. Tree was not healthy when purchased. Check tree for splits, broken branches, insects or disease, and the root system. Do not purchase a tree with encircling roots because the root system will strangle the tree. If already purchased, spread out the roots and cut through them (new roots will grow where you cut the circling roots).

4. A weed eater or mower damaged the tree trunk. Be careful when doing yard work around trees.

3. Roots over dried while waiting to be planted. Make sure

tree has adequate water if you are unable to plant after purchase.

2. Leaves dehydrated while being transported. Remember to cover limbs and leaves for the ride home.

1. Lack of water or over watering during the first growing season is the #1 killer of trees. Especially in heavy, clay soils. Use weekly soil wetness tests to ensure proper watering.

The Coke County Soil and Water District is currently hosting a Tree Sale. Several different species of evergreen and hardwood trees are available this year. Stop by the office at 214 E. 7th Street to pick up an order form and view pictures of mature trees. Call 453-2623 ext. 3 for more information.

## November VP meeting discussed

Vision With A Purpose held its monthly meeting November 3 at 6:30 pm at Victory Assembly of God in Robert Lee. Twenty members were present.

President Marshall Millican called the meeting to order. Brandon Broadbent opened with prayer. Sheri Millican read the minutes from October; they were approved.

Jeffie Roberts gave an update on the Hunter's Bar-B-Q to be held Saturday, November 12, from 6 pm to 9 pm at the Robert Lee Rec Hall. Set up will begin Friday, November 2, and throughout the day Saturday. Tickets are available from merchants, ranchers and VP members in Robert Lee. Raffle tickets are also available from VP members.

Dianne Hefner gave an update on Small Town Christmas to be held December 3. Applications for the Christmas Lighting contest are available from merchants and VP members, December 10 is the deadline. Don't forget, a new "Griswald Award" (Christmas Story) will be presented for the most outlandish decorations. Winners will be announced December 20.

Memorial Park will again be lit, December 3, at dusk. VP is urging members to help with the erection of structures.

Hayrides will be operating December 3 for rides through Robert Lee for a small charge.

Stew and cornbread and chili, drinks, cupcakes and gingerbread men will also be available for purchase in our VP building. Come by and see the progress.

Don't forget, Santa will arrive around 5 pm to visit with children through age 9.

Special guest, John Rainbolt, the administrator of the Robert Lee Care Center, gave an update on the possibility of an operational clinic for Robert Lee in the future.

Heartworker for the month of October was Gaylon Childers. Gaylon has been a long time member, has served on numerous committees. He is always generous with his time and ideas. He and his wife Debbie are now permanent residents of Robert Lee, having come from Odessa.

Gaylon Childers closed the meeting with prayer.



**Vote and Eat!** Once again, the Sorosis Study Club in Bronte hosted a Potato Bake Luncheon on Election Day. Bronte voters could cast their vote at First Baptist Church and walk a block down to the Fellowship Hall of First United Methodist Church to enjoy loaded baked potatoes and a large variety of delicious salads.

## VP Christmas Committee meets

Vision With A Purpose held a Small Town Christmas Committee meeting November 1 at 6:30 pm at Victory Assembly of God. Members present were Renee Smith, Nora Broadbent, Leta Caston, Debbie Childers, and Dianne Hefner.

Small Town Christmas is scheduled for Saturday, December 3, at Memorial Park in downtown Robert Lee. Santa will arrive around 5 pm to hear

children through age 9 tell their Christmas wishes. Lighting of the Park will be at dusk. Refreshments will be available for purchase at VP headquarters. Hayrides will be routed through Robert Lee in order to view the lights for a small fee. This is a special time of year for Robert Lee and we hope all Robert Lee residents come out and participate.

Debbie Childers presented notices of the event that will be distributed around town. Be

sure to pick up your application for the Christmas Home and Business decorating contest. A special award will be presented this year for the most outlandish decorations-The Griswald Christmas Award. It will be a "roving" award, passed on from year to year. December 10 is the deadline for applications.

VP will open their doors for the Christmas Open House, December 2. Be sure and come by for "look see" at our progress and a little refreshment.

After 25 years,  
Kay of Main Street Market  
will make her final sale!



Joyce & Kay

Let's help her make a few more memories by stopping by and wishing her the best! Come shop, visit, snack and enjoy some "spikits" with her as we make her final shopping day an amazing one!

Main Street Market  
Saturday, November 12, 2016  
2 pm to 5 pm  
Downtown Bronte